SPLENDID STORY. TURN TO PAGE 108

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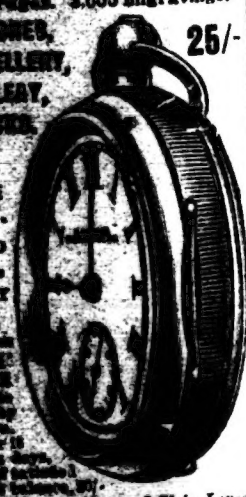

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THE NEXT PAGE—THAT'S THE ONE

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Wise Precaution.

"It is always advisable to know what business a man is in when he proposes marriage to you," said the blonde.

"Why so?" asked the brunette.

"A man once gave me an engagement ring, and, of course, I was a little curious to know what it had cost."

"Naturally."

"Well, I went to a jeweller's to inquire what was the value, and I found the man who gave me the token behind the counter."

Minister: "Is your father at home, William?"

William: "Yes; but he's got rheumatism so bad he ain't safe to talk to."

"I heard you congratulating Mr. Scribbler on his short stories. What on earth do you find in them to admire?"

"Their shortness."

Hard on the P.C.

In a certain town in the south of Scotland there dwelt a policeman with unusually large feet.

One night, after he had retired to rest, he was disturbed by a noise at the back of his house, and on going out to ascertain the cause of it, he found that his garden was overrun by a number of boys.

Robert angrily demanded what they wanted, and received the following reply from one of the urchins as he disappeared over the garden wall: "Oh, we're lukin' for ane o' your auld butes to mak' a rabbit-hoose wi'."

"I noticed a large crowd gathered in front of your house this morning, Worrit; what was the matter?"

"I was discharging the cook."

"I wish my name were Notoriety," sighed a thirty-year-old maiden.

"Why?" asked her mother.

"Because so many men court notoriety."

What Morgan Looks Like.

Imagine a face which combines the chief characteristics of Bismarck, Cecil Rhodes, and Lord Roberts, and you can get an idea of what Mr. Pierpont Morgan is like.

There is not another face like it in the wide world, and could not be anywhere else but in America. Like the two historical giants first mentioned, he is tall, being over six feet in height, and fairly heavy.

One's first impression of Morgan's countenance is that it is a fierce one, but a subsequent glance reveals an underlying good nature. It has enormous powers of expression, and is marked by strong lines.

Life has written a great story upon Pierpont Morgan's countenance, which tells of battles, hopeless, hard-fought, but won openhanded without dissimulation or subterfuge. He typifies the conquering spirit of Uncle Sam as few other living Americans do.

Written in his countenance are his life secrets, hard work, indomitable will, tremendous powers of observation and assimilation, elephantine toughness tempered by flexibility, and enormous, volcanic vital force.

Morgan does not conceal his emotions, nor does he attempt to do so. When pleased he signifies his pleasure by emphatic approval, if of a humorous kind by the heartiest of laughs.

To look at him is to almost catch the infection of his intensely energetic nature, and he infuses all with whom he comes into contact with his spirit.

Like most Americans, he smokes incessantly, large strong cigars. He eats much, drinks moderately, works hard, and sleeps hard.

The only sign of failing about him is his hair, which is growing thin. What remains, however, is crisp, bright, and silvery.

He is one of those huge masses of vitality which every now and again, as in the cases of Napoleon, Bismarck, Gladstone, and Cecil Rhodes, affect the destinies of their generation, and there is no living personality possessed of so much gigantic energy backed up by such colossal wealth.

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Your Little One's Letter.

Only a make-believe letter,
Pencil marks, crooked and queer,
Droll curlycues, and fantastic
Zigzags, mixed up, out of gear.
A twisted-up jumble of puzzles
A scholar himself couldn't read;
But there's laughter and tears,
Hopes, yearning, and fears,
For some loving heart in the screed.

Each quaint line of rubbishy nothing,
Jagged and all turned awry,
Tells to the eye of some mother
A tale for a laugh or a cry.
Each quaint little upstroke or downstroke,
That dot, and this dash over here,
Bent this way and that,
Make some heart pit-a-pat
With the thrill of a smile or a tear.

Beneath the blue sky of heaven,
No science, religion, or art,
No poet, no painter, or preacher
Can thrill the love-strings of the heart
Like the pencil marks, criss-crossed and crooked,
Some upright, and others that nod;
Sweet babyhood's scrawl,
Meaning nothing at all,
But containing a letter from God!

"Do you think," he asked, "that you could learn to love me?"

"I don't know," she answered; "I might, and if I were a man I'd hate to think that I was an acquired taste."

How He Saved His Money.

A story comes from South Africa of how an elderly English miner saved his little fortune from the hands of the Boers. When the war was on the verge of breaking out, he made up his mind to leave the Transvaal for Natal.

He had to carry all his money with him, and knew that the Boers would certainly take every penny they could find from him. So he hammered his gold into clasps and clamps for his box, nailed them on and gave them a good coating of paint. As he expected, he fell into the hands of the enemy, and his box was thoroughly searched. But the trick was never suspected, and he got his £300 worth of gold in safety to British territory.

"Trailing gowns should never be worn on the street, my dear; they are intended for women who ride in carriages."

"Well, Jack, you know very well that it isn't my fault that I haven't a carriage."

Envious Young Man (speaking of favoured rival): "Yes, George is clever and handsome, but he is so abominably conceited."

Sharp Young Lady: "But, Mr. Dumley, if you were handsome and clever, would not you be conceited?"

Rough on the Chameleon.

Everyone knows that the chameleon is a sort of lizard, which changes its colour according to the surroundings. It is asserted that a man recently bought one of these animals with the view of testing its powers. He first placed it upon a red cloth, when it promptly turned red. It was next deposited on a blue surface and at once assumed a triumphant blue colour. So far so good.

The next test consisted in putting the changeable creature upon the Scotch tartan cover of Short Stories, and it was left in solitude to chew upon this colour problem. After a time the experimenter came back. The chameleon was quite dead, with a look of agony impressed upon its speaking countenance.

A BIG SURPRISE FOR YOU . . . . NEXT WEEK. . .

In the next number of PEARSON'S WEEKLY we shall publish an announcement of a big Competition, the prizes in which are of an entirely novel nature.

She Told Him.

"Can you tell me why it is," he growled, as he began diving under the bed, "that my slippers always seem to get pushed over against the wall?"

"Yes, dear," she answered pleasantly.

"You can?"

"Yes, dear."

"Then why is it?"

"Because you don't put them away in the cupboard when you take them off, dear."

Mistress: "Why, Bridget, you surely don't consider these windows cleaned?"

Bridget: "Sure, I washed 'em nicely on the inside, mum, so ye can look out, but I intentionally lift them a little dirthy on the outside so thim aignorant Jones children nixt door couldn't look in."

Quite a Sad Story.

"Mamma, do you like stories?"

"I like true ones, my child."

"Shall I tell you a true one?"

"Yes."

"But you might not like it."

"Oh, yes, I should if you told it."

"But it is quite short. Well, once upon a time there was a water bottle——"

"Yes; go on."

"And yesterday I broke it; but I'll never—ooh!—ooh!—do it again."

They were talking of fame.

"But how, after all, may a man know whether he is really great or not?"

"That's easy. Let him fall ill. If they issue bulletins about him, then he can rest assured that he is truly great."

Why Jelly-fish Sting.

Most visitors at the seaside must have noticed in calm weather, shoals of gorgeously-coloured jelly-fishes floating in the water, while their quivering bodies are often seen stranded on the beach.

Though apparently both helpless and harmless, this is far from being the case, for they are hungry flesh-eaters, and catch all sorts of animals much more highly organised than themselves. And many bathers have found to their cost that these creatures sting in a very painful manner.

One kind, the Portuguese man-of-war, which is common in the warmer part of the ocean, and looks like a coloured bladder from which long streamers hang down into the water, is positively dangerous, for its stings have been known to prove fatal to human beings.

The effect is due to the presence of innumerable microscopic stinging capsules in each of which a long thread with a barbed base is coiled up. From the capsule a sort of trigger projects, and if this is touched by an unfortunate soft-skinned animal, the thread is suddenly shot out, the barbs coming first and piercing the skin, after which the poisoned thread is projected into the wound.

The combined effect of very many of these may be considerable. The beautiful flower-like sea-anemones, often seen clinging to rocks between tide-marks, are similarly provided, but their nettling capsules are not so powerful. One scientist relates, however, that he felt for six months the sting of one of these creatures.

Charity begins at home—but it does not end there—so please send along your ninepence to the Fresh Air Fund.

SPLENDID NEW SERIES.

CONFESSIONS OF A LADY'S MAID.

(The writer of these articles was for many years a lady's maid in good Society. She now relates her experiences, which have been remarkable. Names and places have, for obvious reasons, been altered.)

The Opening Confessions.

MAUD RAEBURN is the daughter of well-connected people. On her father's death she is left very badly off, and determines to strike out a line of her own, so becomes a lady's maid. The husband of her first mistress, Mrs. Donaldson, is in prison for forgery, though he declares he is innocent. Mrs. Donaldson has to go away to America for a time, so Maud Raeburn gets another situation, and while there she discovers that her new master has really committed the crime for which Mr. Donaldson is suffering. Sufficient evidence is obtained to convict the real criminal, and Mr. Donaldson is released.

A LOST IDENTITY.

WHEN I entered the service of Mrs. Temple, at Combe Manor, Dysdale, I thought I had indeed reached a peaceful haven.

Dysdale is in the heart of Surrey, a lovely and remote village, and the Manor House was one of those beautiful old houses which are a joy to the artist and a delight to live in.

Mrs. Temple, a widowed lady, considerably past middle life, was a mistress whom it was a pleasure to serve, and I was more than grateful to my kind friend Mrs. Donaldson for having recommended me for the situation.

To be in the country was refreshing after many years of London life; to live with anyone so gentle, refined, and charming as Mrs. Temple was the most welcome rest after my unpleasant experiences in my last place.

My mistress soon treated me as a friend, and many were the talks we had together when I was engaged in my duties. Though she was a widow and childless, though she lived a lonely life, she never seemed unhappy; she was always too busy making the happiness of others to think about herself!

I had been with her six months when she went away for a week to stay with an old friend in Kent. She did not take me with her, and I missed her kindly presence and sweet face more than I can say, and hailed the day of her return with pleasure. On the morning of that day the housekeeper showed me a telegram received from Mrs. Temple.

The Strange Guest.

"Prepare blue room," it ran, and we concluded that our mistress was bringing a guest home with her.

The blue room was my favourite one in the house. Its paper, chintzes, and carpet were all carried out in varying tints of the colour which named it, and its view over the rose garden first and then to the wide sweep of hills in the distance was enchanting. I wondered vaguely who was to be its fortunate occupant, and helped the housekeeper to adorn it with flowers for the guest.

At four o'clock the carriage returned from the station, and from my window I saw Mrs. Temple alight, followed by the tall, slight figure of a girl dressed in grey.

My mistress seemed to be welcoming the visitor to her house as they stood on the steps, then they both entered the hall. A few minutes later I was summoned to the boudoir to speak to Mrs. Temple.

I found her standing beside the fireplace, and I observed a slightly embarrassed expression on her face. At a little distance from her stood the stranger, who also, I fancied, looked ill at ease.

She was a very lovely girl, with delicately fair face and soft blue eyes, whose glance held something of dazed bewilderment not quite definable in words.

"Raeburn," my mistress said to me. "I—I have brought this young lady home with me, and I want you to help me."

I tried not to show my surprise as I answered respectfully, but I wondered in what way I could help Mrs. Temple.

The Difficulty about Luggage.

"The fact of the matter is, Raeburn, this lady has no luggage; and, as I do not want to excite comment in the house, I thought perhaps you could suggest some way of obviating the luggage difficulty."

My usually calm mistress was singularly at a loss, and I wondered still more over the cause of her embarrassment. Still, my wits were fairly quick, and a solution of the momentary difficulty soon came to me.

"Is your own luggage in the cart, madam?"

"Yes, Raeburn, and it will seem odd that—that this lady should have none!"

"I will let it be supposed that her luggage has been delayed *en route* if you like, madam," I exclaimed quickly; "and meantime I could drive into Braestone"—a town some miles from us—"and buy a few necessaries for the young lady, and a box. They could be sent to the station, and fetched from there by the cart later. No one would have any suspicion then that anything unusual had occurred."

Mrs. Temple looked relieved, and a little flush swept over the face of the stranger.

"It was good of you to think of that," she said, and I noticed how soft and pleasant her voice sounded.

"One thing more, Raeburn," Mrs. Temple added. "I wonder whether, whilst she is with me, you would very kindly act as this lady's maid as well as mine?"

"Need you ask, madam?" I said, "I shall be glad and proud."

I noticed that she had never called the visitor by any name, and I confess my curiosity was aroused, but it was to be satisfied later. When I went to my mistress' room that evening, after I had been into the town and bought the box and all the articles I thought necessary for the strange young lady, Mrs. Temple said to me:

"All this must have surprised you very much, and I want to explain it to you, Raeburn. I am anxious to enlist your sympathy for my visitor."

I ventured to say that my sympathy was already enlisted by the sweet face and gentle ways of the young lady, and Mrs. Temple seemed pleased by my words.

"It is a curious story," she went on. "I must begin by saying I have never met this lady before, nor do I even know her name." My start showed the astonishment I felt. "The fact is," Mrs. Temple added, with some hesitation, "she does not know it herself! When I got into the train to-day at Canterbury she was sitting in the corner of the carriage, of which we were the only two occupants. We had gone only a very little way when she spoke to me. She was evidently in great distress.

"She told me that she had suddenly found herself in the station at Dover on the point of getting into the train, but without the faintest recollection of where she had come from, whither she was bound, or her own name! She was in the deepest trouble, and asked my advice, and I questioned her closely, naturally supposing at first that she was going to beg of me; that she was simply a fraud, and trading on my being alone. I soon discovered my mistake. Her distress and dismay were too genuine to allow me to doubt her, and all my questions only elicited the same reply. She could remember nothing before she found herself getting into the train at Dover, and she had no idea who she was, nor did she know anything about herself.

"She turned out the contents of her pocket, but they gave me no clue to her identity. Her handkerchief was unmarked, her purse only contained money, no cards; and the return half of a ticket to Victoria. 'But what am I to do when I get to Victoria? What am I to do?' she kept on repeating; it was really most pitiful.

I Hear her Story.

"On her ungloved hands I noticed she wore some rings, amongst which was a wedding ring. Her glance followed mine to it, and she touched it gently. 'I do not even know if I am married or unmarried,' she said sadly, 'but certainly this is a wedding ring. Oh! what shall I do? What can I do?' She seemed so young and forlorn that I asked her—perhaps impulsively—to come home with me till we could unravel the puzzle. Surely in a few days advertisements will have set the matter right! Meantime, I have decided with my guest to call her Mrs. Browne. That is quite non-commital, and for the servants' sake and to avoid gossip we must call her something. I am very, very sorry for her."

I was sorry for her, too, and, as the days drifted by and she began to seem like a settled part of the household, I began also to love her.

She talked freely to me of her trouble. Because I—like her—was young, she felt, no doubt, that it was easy to confide in me.

Her terrible loss of memory was a great distress and grief to her; and every effort made by Mrs. Temple to obtain a clue to her identity remained quite fruitless. Advertisement after advertisement appeared in the papers giving the fullest description of her, but no answer came; and when day succeeded day and still we were no nearer to the desired end, Mrs. Browne (as we called her) grew more and more sad.

We Start for the Continent.

Days passed into weeks, and weeks into months, and still she was with us, still unidentified, unknown; still with that strange blank in her memory. Further back than the day on which she had met Mrs. Temple at Dover she could remember absolutely nothing.

The strain and the worry of it all began to tell upon her at last, and when six months had passed by she showed visible signs of drooping.

The doctor summoned by Mrs. Temple examined her carefully, and declared that, though at present no disease was to be found, her present condition of fretted nerves must inevitably end in a serious breakdown unless a complete change was at once insisted upon. And, although Mrs. Browne remonstrated, she did so in vain. Mrs. Temple made immediate plans for taking the visitor, who had come to be like a dear daughter to her, abroad for many weeks.

On a certain bleak February day she and Mrs. Browne and I found ourselves in the Continental express *en route* for Dover and the Continent.

We reached Dover in good time, and hurried on to the boat with the usual jostling crowd, each member of which always seems smitten with terror lest he or she should be left behind.

The day was a very still one, and sounds from the harbour reached us with great distinctness. Mrs. Browne and I stood by the side of the vessel watching the crowd on shore, when all at once the strains of a distant barrel organ broke upon our ears, mingling oddly with the sound of some pealing bells close at hand.

The organ was playing a waltz of a bygone date, and every note of it was wafted to us distinctly through that curious jangle of bells. I turned to comment to my companion upon this strange combination of sweet sounds when I saw that her face had grown deathly white, her eyes were fixed and staring, her lips quivered painfully. I thought she was taken suddenly ill, and I said gently,

"Come and sit down, madam, you are not well."

She turned and looked at me with those strange, fixed eyes, and said, in slow, monotonous accents:

"It is the same tune, and the bells rang in the same way; but where is Jack? oh! where is Jack?"

Her voice rose to a little cry, she looked round her with a kind of despair, and wrung her hands together.

"I must say good bye to him before I leave the ship. I must, I must," she went on; "he is going to India, he——"

Her sentence trailed into silence, her eyes came back to my face, and then she suddenly seised my arm in a fierce grasp.

"It has all come back to me," she exclaimed, in a low, excited voice. "I remember everything; and, oh! what must Jack be thinking of me? He does not know, he cannot know what has become of me!"

It was with difficulty I soothed her agitation, and took her to the deck cabin where Mrs. Temple was seated.

"I have remembered all my past," Mrs. Browne cried, when she saw her friend; "I must go at once on shore and telegraph to Jack. Oh! poor Jack!"

Mrs. Temple did not wait then to hear further explanations; time was precious, and we went hurriedly on shore again, the two ladies going to a hotel, whilst I spent some agitating moments in disinterring our luggage.

When I rejoined my mistress and her companion, I found both in a state of intense excitement, and I myself was soon informed of the strange thing that had occurred.

Mrs. Browne's memory had completely returned to her. I ought not to call her Mrs. Browne any longer, for, as it now appeared, her name was Mason—Grace Mason. The Jack to whom she had alluded so pathetically was her husband, and on the very day when Mrs. Temple had first met her in the Dover train she had been seeing her husband off at that port as he started for India.

How Memory was Lost.

She had travelled with him to Dover, and went on board with him to say good-bye, intending when she came on shore again to stay a few days in the place, and then return to the lodgings she and her husband had occupied in town before his departure. She was to join him in India in a few months' time.

As she and her husband stood together by the ship's side watching the quay, a barrel organ in the distance had begun to play that very waltz we had heard it grind out, and, by a singular coincidence, the bells had rung out their pealing notes and interwoven their melody with the vibrating notes of the waltz. Immediately afterwards she had left the vessel, and was returning to the hotel, when, in crossing a road, she was knocked down by a passing dray, striking her head against the pavement, and being for the moment entirely stunned. Consciousness, however, rapidly returned, and, feeling perfectly well, she refused all offers of help from the crowd which had quickly assembled, and, declaring that she was in no way injured, she passed on. But—and here comes the strange element in the story—from that moment she forgot entirely all that had immediately preceded the accident; all memory of her husband, of their parting, of her intended sojourn at the hotel faded from her mind.

She walked vaguely on along the street, wondering dimly what she was doing there and where she was going; even her own identity was unknown to her.

Putting her hand into her pocket, she found there a ticket for Victoria, and this discovery prompted her to make her way to the station, and get into the next train for London, in which she most providentially met my dear mistress.

The Husband Comes back to England.

She had no relations and no near friends, which accounted for the fact that no answers had been received to the advertisements inserted by Mrs. Temple in the newspapers; and, as her husband was on the way to India, he naturally never saw the papers at all.

The poor lady's first action now that memory was restored to her was to telegraph to her husband assuring him of her safety, and telling him she had been ill, and, in what seemed an incredibly short time, a reply came from his saying that he was coming home on special leave. He arrived three weeks later, by which time we were all back at Combe Manor, and it was delightful to see the joy with which he and his wife greeted one another after the long months they had been soparated.

Captain Mason had passed through a time of the greatest anguish and of torturing suspense, when, not hearing from his wife, he had dispatched letters and telegrams in vain to their London rooms, and had received no answer to any of them.

When finally, in despair, he wrote to the landlady asking for news of his wife, and obtained a curt reply from her to the effect that Mrs. Mason had never returned to the lodgings since the day she had left them with him, he was nearly frantic with misery; and only the exigencies of some frontier fighting, with the utter impossibility of obtaining leave, had prevented his returning to England then and there to search for his wife.

Poor man! His hair had grown prematurely grey in those months of anxiety, and his face was lined and worn, but it had lost much of its haggard and troubled look by the time he and Mrs. Mason left Combe Manor a fortnight later to start for India together.

"I can't leave you behind this time," he said to her. "I don't think I shall ever let you out of my sight again!"

(Another Experience Next Week.)

Pearson's Gossipy Guides surpass all others, and they only cost 1s. each.

Astounding Antics of the Retired Rich.

A strange thing occurred about thirty years ago, whereby the authorities at the Bank of England and the Mint were for a time completely mystified. A former member of a wealthy banking firm, Branksome by name, a white-bearded, venerable-looking old man, resided in a palatial mansion, abutting on a fashionable West-end square. All his life, the day-long jingle of coins in the Lombard Street counting-house had been as music in his ears; and now, in his declining years, a strange thought had entered into his soul.

The poor old man had conceived the idea that the state of the copper coinage was a disgrace to the realm, and that the current pence and halfpence needed washing. Accordingly, he had organised a regular system of collection, cleansing, and re-distribution of dirty coppers. He himself, with his highly-paid men and maidservants, toiled unremittingly; and the extensive stabling and outbuildings at the rear of the house were like the washing department of a firm of beer-bottlers. The coins were washed, steeped in antiseptic solution, burnished, and finally had holes bored in them for convenience in stringing together.

It was pointed out to Mr. Branksome that as the "business" was being conducted, he was subjecting himself to unheard-of pains and penalties for "defacing the coin of the realm." If, however, he would undertake to cease boring holes in the coins, said the officers from Scotland Yard, this liability would be obviated. After some demur, the proposal was agreed to; but Branksome continued washing and burnishing the Queen's money to the day of his death, which occurred not long after.

Beds in Every Room.

Much more recently, the details of another odd case have leaked out. Mr. Southborough, an elderly man, of large private means, was in every respect mentally sound, save for one strange fad. He was a successful business man of the "self-made" variety, and used to declare that, as a poor street arab, he had never known what it was to sleep in a proper bed.

Now, however, lying in beds and contemplating them had become the sole recreation of his life. He had a magnificent bed in every room in the house. In the drawing-room was a splendid brass bedstead in the Italian style; while the dining-room was embellished with a fine old Tudor example in solid oak, to match the other fittings of the apartment. The cellars, attics, and domestic offices, as well as the conservatories and bedrooms, were furnished mainly with cots, cribs, and cradles—even hammocks and ships' bunks were not forgotten—and the most peculiar thing of all was that the servants had every day first to disarrange and then to "make" every bed in the house.

Fly Shooting as a Sport.

An extraordinary case was that of a Mr. Ambert, a wealthy recluse, whose sole hobby in life it was to kill flies. He called it "sport," and as such he certainly seemed to regard it; for he was brimming over with enthusiasm for his strange pursuit. A firm of gunsmiths in the City had specially made for him a rifle of exceeding lightness, and marvellously small bore; and with this curious weapon, he was wont to perambulate his house in sporting attire, shooting flies on the wing. He even shot them as he lay in bed.

Larger game he did not disdain—such as rats and mice—but flies were his favourite sport; and, in the height of the fly-season, from every part of the house came the whip-like crack of his tiny weapon. This intrepid sportsman by no means allowed the flyless British winter to interfere with his venturesome pastime. From the end of September till the following June, he invariably spent abroad, passing from the Riviera to Egypt, and from Egypt even further south, as game grew scarce.

Corns Attended to Free.

In the streets round Trafalgar Square, might have been seen any morning a few years ago, an old gentleman of benevolent aspect, walking with gentle tread, and scrutinising the feet and gait rather than the faces of passers-by. Had you watched the old gentleman's movements, you would presently have seen him accost some shabby-looking man shambling painfully along; and the probability is that you would then have seen the old gentleman help the shabby-looking man into the neat brougham, which had all along been keeping pace with the old gentleman's movements, and in which, probably, one or more similar shabby-looking men would already be seated.

Mr. Travers, for such was the old gentleman's name, had in his time been a great sufferer from corns; and, now that he had realised a handsome competence, it was his delight to roam the streets in search of palpable sufferers from affections of the feet, and take them off in his carriage to his home in the Northern suburbs, where a skilled chiropodist was in constant attendance. Bad "cases" used frequently to occupy his attention for weeks together; during which time the lucky patient could depend on board and lodging of the most sumptuous description.

The futility of testamentary restrictions on wayward heirs was never more strikingly demonstrated than in the North of England, a few years ago. Mr. Pratt, a millionaire mill-owner, in Lancashire, left the bulk of his fortune to his nephew, on condition that the young man should never again enter a public-house. Somewhat to the surprise of his friends, the young fellow accepted the legacy on these terms. No sooner, however, had he entered into possession of his deceased uncle's mansion than the furniture and effects were sold by auction. An army of workmen then appeared, and for months the place was given over to them.

When the grand re-opening took place, it was found that the whole interior of the mansion had been converted into the semblance of a large and luxurious public-house. Tap-room, "snug," bar-parlour, smoke and billiard-rooms—nothing was missing; while from behind a magnificent bar, resplendent barmaids beamed sweet smiles as they measured out free drinks to an army of the legatee's chums. Thus did this young man circumvent the wishes of his well-intentioned relative; and, quite recently, he was still leading a life of languorous ease in his private public-house.

Day Turned into Night.

Another transformation of the interior of a family mansion resulted in an extraordinary inversion of the plans of Nature. The owner, Mr. Brownjohn, a retired stockbroker, was determined to turn night into day, and it cost him thousands of pounds to do it. All the outside windows of the house were built up, so as to exclude every ray of natural light. Entrance to the mansion was by an underground passage; and every room had a door and window opening on to a magnificent central space, which was open to the roof. From the roof, when it was night outside, an imitation sun shone forth an electric glare, which filled the whole place with a light as of day.

The wealthy eccentric rose at nine o'clock each evening, and, having breakfasted, started on a day's routine of work and pleasure. He lunched at one in the morning, drank a cup of tea about four a.m., and dined at seven o'clock, retiring to rest about ten or eleven a.m., when, by an ingenious sliding arrangement in the roof, the bright sky and imitation sun were at once transformed into a concave expanse of inky blackness; from out of which a host of false stars twinkled, and an artificial moon shed forth her spurious beams.

Wouldn't Set Foot on the Ground.

An almost incredible case was that of a Mr. Berkwell, a young gentleman, who, being disappointed in love, vowed he would never set foot on ground again. Fortunately, he was of great wealth, or he must have fared badly in this unsympathetic world. As it was, things were made tolerably easy for him. When he wanted to get up and go out, he was dressed as he lay by his two valets, who then lifted him on to a couch, or deposited him in one of those invalid chairs which can be propelled by the hands alone. When he wished to drive in the park, he was borne out to his carriage on a sort of litter.

His vow, strange to say, did not prevent him being a rather ardent cyclist; lifted on to his machine, he was all right. But, wherever he went, he was closely followed by his brougham, with a footman inside as well as one on the box; so that, in the event of a spill, the two together would be able to lift both him and the machine into the vehicle, without either the necessity of their master getting on his feet, or the sacrifice of the fat old coachman's dignity.

Miranda (sobbing): "It is better in every way that we should part, dear Orlando."

Orlando (in a choked voice): "Only in one way, dearest."

Miranda: "Yes, beloved?"

Orlando (overcome with emotion): "It is cheaper, darling."

"There is one thing I like about your husband; he never hurries you when getting ready for a walk."

"Very little credit is due to him for that, my dear. Whenever I see that I am not likely to be ready in time I simply hide his hat or his gloves out of the way, and let him hunt for them up and down until I have finished dressing."

"I have come for my umbrella," said the lender of one of those articles, on a rainy day, to his friend.

"Can't help that," exclaimed the borrower; "don't you see that I'm going out with it?"

"Well, yes," replied the lender, astonished at such outrageous impudence; "yes, but—but—but what am I to do?"

"Do!" replied the other, as he threw up the top and walked off, "do as I did—borrow one."

I DRIVE SWELLS.

THE WORK OF SOCIETY COACHMEN.

My age is now thirty-six, and I have been driving for good families in and out of town for the past eleven years. I am a married man, but "without encumbrance," which means, of course, that my wife and I are not parents. My present employer is a man of large means, and he occupies a public position. More than this I cannot say, but it is enough to show that I have many opportunities of seeing sides of life that doubtless are of interest to those who do not share my opportunities.

If I briefly give an outline of my movements during the twelve months, it will convey to those interested the ceaseless round of activity that Society people indulge in. During the months of January, February, and March, I am usually down in the Midlands, where my employer has his chief residence. If, however, my employer, or his wife, or any of his family are not in a good state of health, I may spend one or more of these months at Mentone, or some other place on the Riviera.

The first week in April generally sees my master and his family move up to London for the season. When in town my hours of labour are considerably longer than when in the country. The night work, too, is the great drawback for those who, like myself, like to get to bed at a decent hour. As a rule, during the London season I do not get to bed before twelve or one o'clock. Often enough, it is four or five o'clock in the morning before I am able to "turn in." Although it is so late when I retire, I am, generally speaking, expected to be on the box again by eleven o'clock next morning, when my mistress and her daughters go for a drive in the park, or elsewhere.

If the dinner party, or the dance to which the family has been on the previous evening has been of a fatiguing character, I have the good luck not to be required until the afternoon—an arrangement which suits me much better than does the morning drive. Between the first week in April and the last week in June, I, and two of my assistants, four horses and a couple of carriages, are dispatched to Maidenhead, or to Cromer, or Torquay. This little break in the season is what my employer styles his "breathing space."

July is one of the most unsettled months in the year for me. Sometimes I am allowed to take a week's holiday during this month. Last year, for instance, both my employer and his wife were ill, and were staying at Harrogate, and I had quite an easy time of it. The year before that, however, my master was entertaining some relatives of his down at Bournemouth, and I was driving about every day of the week for six or eight hours. Nothing adds so seriously to the work of a Society coachman as does the presence of visitors in the employer's house—the poorer the circumstances of the visitors the harder is the lot of the host's coachman.

August and September of every year are spent at my governor's seat in Scotland. My work there is of a varied character. I may not, perhaps, have to drive a pair nearly so frequently as when in town, but I am expected to take my master about in his dogcart early and late. I also have to act the part of escort to my employer's grown-up daughters when they take riding exercise. When in town the duties of escort are undertaken by my employer himself, for he finds a gallop along the Row as enjoyable as do his daughters, but when up North there are not enough admiring eyes about for the duty to be sufficiently tempting.

October sees us back in town again. Our stay may be for a fortnight or a month; it all depends upon the state of the social world, and the Parliamentary business on hand. During the Autumn visit my mistress and her daughters go shopping daily. They actually order their Christmas cards and other unlikely things at this time of the year. Very often I am kept waiting outside one business establishment for an hour or an hour and a half at a stretch. This practice is not good for the horses, especially if the weather be at all inclement. Yet I am afraid to drive up and down, for it is a hundred to one that so soon as I get seventy yards away the ladies will make their appearance in the street.

November and December are invariably spent at home in the Midlands, and it is here that my most regular and congenial work is done. I know to a nicety the movements that will be expected of me. The daily drive in the afternoon to the village and the occasional evening drive to one of the neighbouring mansions is nearly all that I have to do. On Sundays, when the weather is bad, I am sometimes called upon to take the family to morning Church service. I am, when at home, among my friends, and I am able to enjoy their company evening after evening. If I have any irksome duties when at home they are in consequence of such unexpected events as the illness of one or more of the carriage horses.

On the whole, the life of a Society coachman is not a bad one, provided, of course, that he loves the animals he drives, and that he is not averse to a change of scene and somewhat irregular hours. As in all other Society situations, a great deal depends upon the character of the employer; if he be an unreasonable man the sooner the coachman decides to look for another post the better for him.

A Coupon for £500 free insurance is given with Pearson's Gossipy Guides.

QUESTIONS WORTH ANSWERING

Half-a-crown is paid for every Question used, and two guineas a column for Replies.

REPLIES.

SASH WINDOWS.

When did Sash Windows Make their First Appearance in England? (6164.)

The history of sash windows is somewhat obscure, but the probability is that they were a Dutch invention, and that they were introduced into England soon after the Revolution of 1688. The derivation of the word "sash," in this sense, is the Dutch *sas*, a sluice—Old English *sasse*. In Queen Anne's reign they were yet so comparatively uncommon as to be mentioned as a special feature of houses that were advertised as "To let." In the TATLER, for instance, No. 178, May 27th—30th, 1710, there is this advertisement:

"To be lett, in Devonshire Square, near Bishopsgate, a very good Brick House of 3 Rooms of a Floor, and a good Hall, with very good light and dark Closets, the whole House being well wainscotted, and sash'd with 30 Sash Lights, a very pleasant and convenient Office below Stairs, etc."

From England they passed into France, where the first to put them up was Marshal de Lorge, at his new house at Montmartre. Speaking of this, Lister, in 1699, writes in his "Journey to Paris": "We had the good fortune here to find the Marshal himself. He showed us his great sash windows; how easily they might be lifted up and down, and stood at any height; which contrivance, he said, he had out of England, by a small model brought on purpose from thence, there being nothing of this poise in windows in France before; the house was but building, etc."

OUR SILLIEST LAW.

Which is the Most Unnecessary Law that is Now Enforced in this Country? (6167.)

It would be easy to point out several laws which would answer the question, but, perhaps, the best is furnished by the old laws passed in the reigns of James I., Charles I., and Charles II., which are still on the Statute Book, and are in some cases enforced, although rarely and mostly ineffectually. For instance, a tradesman may be prosecuted for pursuing his trade on Sunday, but the fine, which meant a very large sum when the Acts were passed, is nowadays a mere trifle to a man who conducts a successful Sunday trade. There is no power of imprisonment, or of closing the offender's premises. Reporters invariably give a gratuitous and very valuable advertisement to the offending trader, and he pays the fine and repeats the offence.

DISEASED PERSONALITY.

What are "Diseases of Personality"? (6165.)

These are, perhaps, the most obscure diseases that are known to medical science, which has only just, as it were, begun the serious investigation of them. Personality includes all that we call the character, disposition, and inclination of a human being, and any cause, mental or physical, acquired or inherited, which affects the character of an individual in an abnormal way, amounts to a disease of personality more or less severe. Perhaps the most familiar illustration is that of kleptomania, which has been proved over and over again to afflict wealthy persons, who have not the slightest reasonable temptation to steal anything.

Inherited alcoholism is another. So is a tendency to uncontrollable outbursts of temper, which are very frequently a premonitory symptom of insanity. Another very curious instance of "disease of personality" is what is usually called a "hark-back" to previous generations. It is sometimes found in old families which have intermarried closely with others that a child of this century will, as it were, skip some generations, and exhibit the vices or diseases of a remote ancestor. It is hardly necessary to add that "diseases of personality" are practically incurable.

THE OBJECTION TO CRAMMING.

What is the Strongest Argument against "Cramming" in Early Life? (6169.)

The very simple and yet too little known fact, even among those who should know it best, that the human brain grows in two ways. The child's brain grows first in weight and what may be called external development. If rationally educated, the internal development of the brain cells keeps pace with the general growth, and, although, as a rule, a child so educated seldom exhibits any of those pernicious properties of the "infant prodigy," it lasts, and some of the greatest names in science and literature could be quoted in support of the theory that it is better to leave a child's brain to lie fallow for the first few years of its life.

Professor Huxley once said that a boy's education should not begin before ten years of age. William Shakespeare, Walter Scott, Charles Darwin, and Herbert Spencer, are only four of many cases that could be quoted in proof. Early cramming as practised in board schools and proprietary schools where only "results" are considered, means developing the internal structure of the brain at the expense of its general development. This is the reason why boys and girls who are brilliant scholars of a sort up to fifteen or sixteen so often come to a dead stop about nineteen, and never do anything else.

OUR FIVE CAPITAL OFFENCES.

Is there any Crime save Murder and High Treason for which the Criminal can be Executed under English Law? (6170.)

There are five such crimes known to the present English law. Murder, high treason, piracy, attempts to destroy public arsenals and dockyards, and arson within the limits of the Port of London. The question, of course, excludes several other offences under the Army Act, and the Naval Discipline Act. Death sentences under these acts may be passed for a variety of offences, but they are hardly ever passed in time of peace, and hardly ever inforced even in times of war.

"THE REIGN OF SHAM."

Which English Reign might best be Styled "the Age of Imposture"? (6172.)

That of Charles II. From the King himself, downwards through every class of his subjects, almost every man and woman made themselves out to be what they were not. Charles, whilst posing as a Protestant, and the protector of the nation's interests, was in reality a Roman Catholic, and the recipient, for many years, of an annual subsidy from Louis XIV., in return for which he made peace and war with the Dutch and others as Louis willed.

The highest in the land were no better than their master. The Duke of Buckingham, for instance, made a business of both political and social intrigue, and went so far as to hire the notorious Blood to assassinate the Duke of Ormond, for whom he professed friendship. With such examples before them it is not wonderful that the mass of the people should have cultivated imposture as an art, and unfortunately such legislation as the Test Act, and the Act of Uniformity, together with the scarcity of ready money, and the peculation rampant in the public service, gave ample opportunity to every grade of society to practise deceit.

THE SACRED SOUTH.

Why was the South Side of the Churchyard always Preferred to the North as a Last Resting-place? (6176.)

In early times, the bodies of persons of importance or special sanctity were buried within the church walls, and this is a custom which has been, to a great extent, preserved to the present day, by the burial of distinguished persons within the walls of Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's. At the same time, it was an ancient custom to bury the bodies of notorious evil-livers who were not, however, excluded from burial in consecrated ground, on the north side of the church, because this was the shadiest and, therefore, coldest. From this custom grew a prejudice against this side of the churchyard, and thus the south side became next in honour to the interior of the church itself. There may possibly be a still remoter origin of the custom to be found in the fact that in all ancient mythologies the north was invariably considered to be the particular domain of the powers of darkness.

THE FIRST CLERICAL INVENTOR.

Has a Clergyman ever Patented an Improvement in Firearms? (6171.)

Yes; the Rev. A. J. Forsyth, of Belhelvia, Aberdeenshire, patented the percussion cap, April 11th, 1807. The MORNING POST, December 23rd, 1808, has the subjoined advertisement: "To Sportsmen.—The Patent Gun-Lock, invented by Mr. Forsyth, is to be had at No. 10, Piccadilly, near the Haymarket. Those who may be unacquainted with the excellence of this Invention are informed that the inflammation is produced without the assistance of flint, and is much more rapid than in the common way. The Lock is so constructed as to render it completely impervious to water, or damp of any kind, and may, in fact, be fired under water."

THE MOST TITLED MONARCH.

Which Living Monarch has the Greatest Number of Titles? (6173.)

Of all the ruling sovereigns of Europe, the Austrian Emperor can boast the largest number of titles of nobility and territorial rank. In addition to his Imperial crown, His Majesty is in nine different ways entitled to wear regal tiara, twice is he qualified to be addressed as Grand Duke, once as Archduke, eighteen times as Duke, once as Grand Prince, and in numerous ways he is entitled to be called count or lord. In all, his different titles amount to considerably over a hundred.

The titles of the King of Spain suggest a large part of the history of the world. He is King of Jerusalem, which is Turkish; of Navarre, which is French; of Gibraltar, which is British; and of the East and West Indies, which are largely British; Duke of Brabant and Count of Flanders, now the two independent kingdoms of Holland and Belgium; and sovereign of numerous other lands long since independent or under the undisputed sway of other Powers. He bears upon his person, indeed, an epitome of the glory and the fall of Spain.

WHERE WOMEN MAY NOT PRAY.

Where are Women not Allowed to Pray? (6174.)

As regards public prayer, there is a practically universal prohibition against women in Mohammedan countries. They are not admitted beyond the thresholds of the mosques, but, on the other hand, the Koran distinctly encourages women to pray in private. Some Hindu congregations deny the privilege of prayer to their women altogether. Among the Ainu, a race supposed to be the aborigines of Japan, women are not permitted to pray or offer sacrifice, except in rare cases, as the deputies of their husbands. The reason for this practice is that the Ainu women are not supposed to possess souls, and therefore their prayers would be quite unavailing. Among the natives of Madagascar, women are permitted to pray, but only to the powers of evil, a kind of intercessory prayer. Only men are permitted to address prayers directly to the Supreme Being.

OUR MOST IGNOBLE TREATY.

When did Britain Conclude the most Mistaken Peace? (6177.)

Three answers might be given to this question. The first was the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. The war had lasted eleven years, it was glorified by the splendid victories of Marlborough, and raised the National Debt to £38,000,000, a very great sum for those days, and yet scarcely a single object for which the war was waged was attained, and practically the same may be said of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, which was equally barren of all the results that we had fought for.

But perhaps the worst of all was the Treaty of Paris in 1763, which ended the Seven Years' War. This practically killed the great Pitt, whose last speech consisted of a denunciation of it. Not only was absolutely nothing gained by it, but we even lost both prestige and power through it, and had to surrender the Philippines as well as many other most valuable conquests. Never in the history of war did the victors come out of the struggle at such a pitiable disadvantage as we did then. In later time, the disgraceful peace after Majuba broke our most solemn pledges, and, as events have proved, cost us £250,000,000 and 21,000 men to regain what could then have been had almost for nothing.

QUESTIONS.

6201. Is it probable that communication will ever be established between this planet and another?
6202. Which of the present rulers is the most despotic?
6203. Was betting known to the ancients?
6204. Is it probable that there is any life at either of the poles?
6205. Is there a law in force that has no ruling power over the people?
6206. Which is the oldest working locomotive in the world?
6207. Which is the most dangerous "recreation"?
6208. Which comparatively recent chemical discovery has had the greatest economic effect?
6209. Which is the longest known lawsuit in this or any other country?
6210. Which playwright's works have been most successful?

CONDITIONS.

We shall be glad to receive from our readers replies to any of the questions asked here. Each reply must bear the writer's name and address. We shall print a selection of replies to each question, and shall pay at the rate of £2 2s. a column for all matter printed. The same reader may send replies to any number of queries, whether his own or not. Envelopes should be marked "Replies" in the top left-hand corner, and answers to the questions in any issue of the paper must reach us by first post on the Monday of the week following that for which the paper is dated. Payment will only be made for replies published. Authorities on which replies are based must be given where possible. Half-a-crown will be paid on publication for every question received which is considered worthy of insertion.

"We don't hear you sing nowadays, Miss Madeline."
"My physician has strictly forbidden me to practise."
"Does he live in your neighbourhood?"

Doo D. (to jeweller): "I brought back this engagement ring that I bought yesterday."
Jeweller: "Didn't it suit?"
Doo D.: "Yes, it was all right; but I didn't suit."

SHE (after the elopement): "I have received a letter from my father. Dear papa is so absent-minded."
He: "In what way?"
She: "He inclosed a lot of millinery and dress-making bills, and forgot to put in the money to pay for them."

YOUNG ENTHUSIASTIC ARTIST (innocently): "I presume, Miss Fitzdook, you paint?"
Miss Fitzdook (indignantly, misapplying his remarks): "Sir, do you intend to insult——"
Young Artist (very much embarrassed): "Oh, 'pon my word, Miss Fitzdook, don't think for a moment I alluded to the paint on your face."

Founded 1871.

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Towns that Persecute Invalids.

Places where you shouldn't Go if you are ill.

The hotel keepers and boarding-house proprietors of Mentone, Nice, Bordighera, and one or two other Riviera towns of lesser note, have recently formed an anti-phthisis league.

Invalids afflicted with consumption are to be, not exactly tabooed altogether, but barred from establishments wherein healthy guests are entertained.

The members of the league argue, and not without some show of reason, that persons suffering from tuberculosis drive away ordinary tourists. They also say that, owing to cheaper railway fares and increased facilities for travelling, their beautiful country is becoming more and more the resort of consumptives, who come there in hopes of being cured, but who, too frequently, only find there an early grave. Disease and death, they maintain, are entirely inimical to their interests. Hence their seemingly hard-hearted decision.

For hard-hearted it does certainly appear at first sight. Nevertheless, it is logical enough; and only what many of the Swiss resorts have already done after a less ostentatious fashion. There, however, consumptives, while not received at the ordinary hotels, are welcomed at certain sanatoriums.

Where Police Fine Consumptives.

America is even more callous in this direction. Sullivan County, State of New York, for instance, has openly declared its intention of driving consumptives beyond its borders; and has passed an ordinance forbidding residents to receive those so afflicted, not only in boarding-houses and hotels, but also in sanatoriums, of which latter there are several in the district. Nor is this all. It has even been rendered illegal to receive any consumptive into a private family, unless the sufferer be an immediate relative, and this where there is no question whatever of payment in return for the hospitality. And the curious law is not by any means a dead letter, as is proved by the fact that at Liberty, the county seat, only recently, some twenty unfortunate consumptives were rounded up before a Justice of the Peace and heavily fined.

Arizona has gone even one better than this, if the Journal of the American Medical Association is to be believed. This State is a country of ravines, gorges, and fiery deserts, and it is to these latter that her consumptives are to be relegated.

Not, of course, that they are to be cast out into the wilderness to die. Special sanatoriums are to be erected to receive them. But these are to be situated in "remote and inaccessible localities, far removed from the abodes of healthy persons, so that no possibility may exist of contagion being spread abroad in the surrounding neighbourhood."

How Lepers Exist in Honolulu.

Lively, this, for the consumptives! It is, of course, merely a revival of the lazaretto system, which mediæval Europe enforced against its lepers; and which, for the matter of that, is in vogue to this day in Honolulu. Go to reside in this beautiful capital of the most beautiful island in the world, have the misfortune to contract leprosy—and you can easily do so, for it is there exceedingly prevalent—and see what will happen.

First will wait on you a smooth-voiced, suave-mannered official, the doctor. After him, close on his heels, will follow a couple of native policemen. And before you know where you are, you will find yourself whisked off in a Government pair-horse ambulance, clapped under hatches on a Government steam launch, and transported for life to the Government island leper colony of Molokai.

This is no fancy picture. The thing was done for years when Hawaii was under its native kings and queens. It is done now. The only difference is that, at the present time, you run no risk of being shipped to Molokai if you are rich. But if you are poor, and more especially if you are what in those parts they call a "beach-comber," that is to say a friendless, stranded, poor white man—then you must go!

Aleppo's Spring Cleaning.

Every ten years, Aleppo, in Syria, has a sort of invalid "spring cleaning." A careful house-to-house visitation is inaugurated by the authorities, and anyone found suffering from any infectious or contagious disease is promptly bundled neck and crop outside the walls, where they are left to die or recover as chance may direct. This is due to an old superstition among the inhabitants that the recurrence of plague is to be expected in the course of the concluding twelve months of each decade.

A somewhat similar, but far more stringent custom exists in San Roque, a town in Southern Spain. It is a pretty walled place, situated on a hill, and the inhabitants are among the most lively and hospitable in Andalusia, which is saying a good deal. Nevertheless, let the stranger within their gates be afflicted with illness, even of the mildest kind, and out he has to go, no matter what his rank or nationality.

The charter under which the people claim the right to do this was granted them in 1804 by King Charles IV. In that year the plague broke out at Gibraltar, and thence spread into Spain, causing terrible mortality. San Roque, however, which stood right in the path of the pestilence, took the law into its own hands, and by means of an armed cordon of its citizens, kept up by night as well as by day, warded off the infection.

Certain merchants pretended to be aggrieved at this, and brought an action against the townspeople; but the courts declared that the latter had acted sensibly, and for the best, and the King, to put the matter beyond doubt for the future, granted them license under his Royal hand and seal to put in exercise similar precautions whenever they should think fit to do so. The remedy seems at first sight a somewhat too drastic one, but its efficacy so far has been undoubted. Even in the terrible cholera epidemic of 1835, when over 50,000 deaths occurred in the province, and the populations of the neighbouring towns of Grenada, Malaga, Valencia, and Murcia were decimated, San Roque succeeded in keeping itself free from infection.

Jacksonville's Lesson.

This particular method of persecuting invalids, however, is a sword which can be made to cut both ways, as the people of Jacksonville, Florida, discovered to their cost during the yellow fever epidemic of 1888.

During the autumn of 1879, when the same dread pestilence was raging all through the Southern States, Jacksonville maintained a strict isolation by means of the now familiar volunteer armed cordon, with the result that great hardship was inflicted on the stricken backwood settlements, whose sick looked to the city for medical assistance and comforts. This particular outbreak took its rise outside Jacksonville, but in 1888 the exact reverse was the case, the fever making its appearance first in the city itself.

The news rapidly spread, and the people of the outlying towns and villages, mindful of Jacksonville's former selfishness, united against the stricken city. Many fugitive inhabitants were shot down in cold blood, and the rest were shut up so closely within the infected area of streets and houses, that no fewer than 396 of them perished miserably ere help arrived by sea from the North.

Be Natural.

A heated iron,
A bewitching curl,
A little rouge,
A pretty girl.

A spiteful shower,
And then behold
A freckled girl,
A lover sold.

"Did you say you made a speciality of home cooking?" asked the seaside lodger who had just arrived.

"Yes, indeed," answered the motherly landlady.

"Too bad! That's what I came here to get away from!"

Young Wife (poetically): "You always seemed to have plenty of money before we were married."

Loving Husband: "It was only seeming. I had very little."

Young Wife: "And you told me you expected to be rich."

Loving Husband: "I am rich, my dear. I've got you."

"Did you hear what young Mr. Mooney gave his *fiancée* as an engagement ring? It was simply magnificent!"

"No; what was it?"

"Well, you see, his father is a big stock-holder in both the Beef Trust and Coal Trust or he never could have done it; but he gave her a ring cut from a soup bone, set with a big lump of coal!"

The young man in the tram, observing that the handsome young lady on the opposite seat was looking at him very intently, and thinking that he might have impressed her favourably, changed his seat for one by her side and ventured to remark:

"Haven't I seen you before somewhere?"

"Well," she replied, "I'm not quite certain, but I think you are the man who stole our spoons!"

He got out.

A famous orator and statesman was once travelling in the country, and stopped over-night at an out-of-the-way farmhouse inhabited by an old man and his wife.

After breakfast the next morning his host, who had been in a flutter of excitement ever since he learnt who his distinguished guest was, said he would like to make one slight request before the visitor departed.

"Couldn't ye," he said, with evident anxiety, "couldn't ye jest make my wife an' me a little speech before leavin' us?"

WHAT TENANTS MAY NOT DO.

An Article for Those Who Rent Houses

A careful and prudent man who hires a house will take care to have a written agreement so that the terms may be clearly stated and put beyond dispute. Many people do not bother about having a written agreement (the expense of which has to be paid by the tenant, unless the landlord agrees to pay half), but are content to hire their houses verbally.

In such cases questions often arise as to what was actually said when the house was hired. The landlord perhaps a few months afterwards contends that the tenant agreed to do all the repairs, and the tenant says that the subject of repairs was not even mentioned.

Then, too, one party or the other frequently fails to realise the effect of the arrangement he has made. Jones goes to a house agent and agrees to take a house from June 24th at the yearly rent of £30, payable by quarterly payments on the usual quarter days.

Nothing is said about notice, and Jones thinks he can put an end to the tenancy by giving a quarter's notice. He is rather surprised to find in a year or two, when he wants to move to a larger house, that he has to give six months' notice expiring on June 24th.

When a man hires a house at a yearly rent and no stipulation is made about notice the landlord may insist on having six months' notice expiring at the same time of year as the tenancy commenced. The tenant also can only be turned out by a similar notice.

If a house is hired at so much a quarter, a month or a week, then the notice to quit must be a quarter's, a month's, or a week's notice, as the case may be.

Tenants frequently put up greenhouses, bicycle sheds, or other buildings, or they put new stoves or cupboards in the house, and at the end of the tenancy when they begin to remove these things, the landlord steps in and claims them as his property.

The general rule is that all buildings erected by the tenant and all fixtures put up inside the house become the property of the landlord. There are, fortunately for tenants, wide exceptions to this rule.

Any building which simply rests on the ground, or on a brick foundation without being attached to it, may be removed by the tenant. Bicycle sheds would generally come within this exception, but if the posts were let into the ground the tenant would not have the right to remove the shed.

Another wide exception is that things which are put up in the house or outside for the purposes of trade, ornament, or domestic convenience may be removed by the tenant. Consequently, if a market gardener put up a substantial greenhouse for use in his trade he would be able to take it away, but a similar erection put up by a private individual would belong to the landlord.

If a clerk plants a few trees or even a box border in his garden he may not take them up again, but a nurseryman planting trees or shrubs for the purpose of his trade may remove them. A tenant has the right to take away such things as stoves, grates, bells, bookcases, cupboards, and blinds which he may have put in the house during his tenancy, but if in removing them he does any damage he must repair it.

Anything the tenant may remove must be taken away by him before he actually quits the premises. After he has given up possession to the landlord he has no right to touch the property.

If the tenant takes away any fixtures which he was not entitled to remove the landlord may claim damages.

When there is a written agreement it generally states who is to do the repairs. The usual arrangement being that the tenant keeps the inside of the premises in repair, painting, papering, and whitewashing when necessary, and the landlord does the outside repairs, such as painting the outside wood and ironwork, repairing the walls and roof.

In the case of large houses tenants often have to pay several hundred pounds when they leave, because they have not kept the house in a sufficiently good state of repair. Where no arrangement is made about the repairs the landlord is not obliged to do anything to the property, and if he declines to do what is necessary the tenant must put up with the inconvenience, or give notice to quit and remove elsewhere.

A landlord who has not agreed to do repairs is not bound to rebuild the house if burnt down, but the tenant would have to keep on paying rent until he could put an end to the tenancy by the proper notice. Tenants should always stipulate that their rent shall cease if the premises are destroyed by fire.

A person who hires a house on a yearly tenancy is bound to do certain repairs, such as replacing glass in the windows, or putting on some slates to keep the wet out, and any tenant would be bound to make good damage done by him or his family.

If a tenant or his family broke a door he would have to repair it or put in a new one. He would not have to paper or paint, unless, for example, his children had torn the paper off the walls or disfigured it with drawings, or by scraping off the paint.

If a tenant agree to do general repairs and the premises are burnt down, he will be obliged to rebuild as well as to keep on paying his rent. His best way to protect himself if he has made such an agreement is to insure against damage by fire.

"The Woman of Death." Thrilling novel by Guy Boothby, price 6d.

Ballet of Skeletons.

An interesting exhibition is being arranged in Vienna for next year under the presidency of the celebrated inventor Szczepanik, which will bring forward all the great discoveries of the last twenty years. Szczepanik himself is the inventor of a new method of tapestry-making which will revolutionise the art. Among other attractions will be a ballet of skeletons, arranged by means of X-rays directed on a real corps de ballet hidden from the public.

Twenty-one Horses Shot Under Him.

If Comma:l'ant Moller, now a Boer prisoner in Southern India, is to be taken literally, he has certainly established a peculiar war record of his own. He is reported to have said that he had no fewer than twenty-one horses shot under him, and was never touched once.

Utilising an Illness.

A Kentucky farmer caught a fever. His wife was told to keep him quiet in bed. She was a practical woman, and so packed him in with three dozen new-laid eggs, and warned him not to move lest he break them. The fever ran its course of twenty-one days. The farmer recovered, and six-and-thirty healthy young chickens were hatched out.

The Journalists' Paradise.

Copenhagen is an ideal city for hard-working journalists. A daily paper in the Danish capital announced at the beginning of last month it would suspend publication during July, August, and September, in order that the staff might enjoy a long summer holiday. Its readers were told to look for its reappearance in October with fresh pleasure and expectation.

Alarming American Railway Records.

In the past three months, during which time exceptionally speedy "flyers" have been put in operation by many of the American railways, there have been 813 persons killed and 9,958 injured in railway accidents. In the same period there have been 1,220 collisions and 838 derailments. Suits are pending against railways by persons injured or by the relatives of persons killed for a total amount of nearly £50,000,000.

Easily Caught.

Pretended deafness is readily exposed by a simple device, which is often resorted to by the Parisian authorities. Six men there recently tried to escape conscription, but they subsequently betrayed themselves. One man was informed that he might stroll about the barrack yard, a portion of which was paved with stone. A few minutes later a coin was adroitly dropped behind him, and its musical jingle caused him to turn to look for it. The same trick was tried with each of the other five, and succeeded in every case.

Saint Cuthbert's Comb.

It was formerly the custom to bury combs with the dead—which clearly shows that these articles of the toilet had sacred significance in the eyes of the people of the old world. The comb buried with St. Cuthbert, and now preserved at Durham, is of ivory and measures six and a quarter inches in length and four and a half inches in width. It is ascribed to the eleventh century, and has a double row of teeth, divided by a broad, plain band, perforated in the middle with a round hole for the finger.

Motor Ascends a Tower.

Everybody who has visited Copenhagen knows the old Round Tower, with its winding "stepless" stairway to the top. It is 120 feet high, and tradition has it that Tsar Peter the Great once drove up to the top in a four-horse vehicle. The stairway is about twelve feet wide only, and it was therefore a novel and remarkable feat performed by a motor-car driver, who one morning quite recently, drove his car up to the top in one minute. The only danger attached to the ride is the possible damage which the car may suffer in colliding with the wall. The feat of steering it round and round within the limited space is difficult to accomplish.

Electric Battery in a Man.

Anybody who shakes hands with Henry Longman of Summerville, Pa., gets an electric shock of confusing power. Three years ago, while peeling tanbark, he was struck by lightning and has ever since possessed the queer power of transmitting an electric shock to everything he touches. By passing a blade of a knife between his thumb and finger during the process of a storm he charges the metal so strongly that heavy weights can be lifted. When flies alight upon him they drop dead, and when he is in a dark room his eyes shine like incandescent lights. Whenever a storm approaches Longman becomes so strongly charged with electricity that it is dangerous to touch him. He says he feels no inconvenience except that he dare not go near a moving locomotive for fear of being drawn against it and killed.

For the Benefit of Ugly Girls.

Germany is ahead in novelties of a charitable nature. In the town of Haschmann prizes are offered yearly for the men who will marry the ugliest, most crippled, and the women over forty who have been jilted at least twice. The money was left by a big financier, and he, realising that beauty is an attraction hard to overcome, made a provision in his will that out of the income of the fund not less than sixteen pounds shall go with the ugliest girl in any year, and the cripple shall receive twelve pounds. The poor women over forty who have been jilted by a lover receive, when the funds will permit, ten pounds each, but the trustee can vary this amount, and, at his own discretion, offer a larger prize to someone who will marry an unusually ugly girl, or one to whom nature has been specially unkind.

Crying Contest.

At a "crying contest" recently held in Chicago in the presence of 200 interested spectators, a Miss Green set up a unique record by shedding thirty-one tears in five minutes. A Miss Webb came second, although she failed to shed more than nineteen tears in the same time.

Rats in a Post Office.

From Tunis it is reported that the post-office there has lately been infested by thousands of rats, which gnaw at and destroy the letters. A troop of cats introduced by the authorities have not succeeded in driving the rats away, and the postmaster advises the public to inclose their letters in small metallic tubes!

Spontaneous Combustion.

"Spontaneous combustion" was the medical verdict upon the case of Charles Page, a workman, who was found in flames at two o'clock in the morning in the streets of Geneva. He was known as a heavy drinker, and there were no traces of pipe, tobacco, or matches among the *débris* of charred clothing.

Europe's Densest Population.

The Belgian Government has just issued a statistical report showing that the population of Belgium is the densest in Europe, there being 606 persons to every square mile, as against 410 in Holland and 349 in England. There are still over 12 per cent. of Belgian soldiers who can neither read nor write.

Crow as Electrician.

A crow has been getting the Calcutta Telephone Company into trouble. It built its nest at the central office where four wires converged, and used tin clippings and bits of wire for the purpose, with the result that it established complete electrical communication between the whole of the four lines. When a subscriber rang up someone he wanted he was answered from four different offices at once.

An Impossible Task.

A telegram from Simla makes the announcement that "It is intended to inoculate six million men and women in the Punjaub, thirty-seven private doctors being imported from England on liberal terms as inoculators. The sanction of the Secretary of State is required." Evidently, seeing that if the doctors inoculated 100 a day, it would take the thirty-seven several centuries to get through their work.

Cosmopolitan Labour.

It is curious how the various races of humanity on the New South Wales opal fields make certain lines of trade peculiarly their own. The Chinese are well represented among the storekeepers. The camel drivers are all Afghans, the bullock drivers are true sons of Britannia's Southern Empire. The saloon owners are generally English or Scotch, the lucky man who finds stones is usually an Irishman, and the buyers are all either Germans or Jews.

French Red Tape.

M. Curet, the President of the Marseilles Tribunal, is a pluralist and a stickler for red tape. Quite recently he had, as president, to obtain permission from the chairman of the municipality for some trifling formality. Now M. Curet is also the chairman of the municipality. So he wrote to himself, politely asking his own permission, and duly replied to himself, amiably granting to himself the permission requested. The exigencies of red tape were thus fully complied with.

Didn't Want Another Operation.

The operation for appendicitis is an American invention, and the doctors across the water are proud of it. So much so indeed that, according to popular report, whenever there is any doubt as to the diagnosis of a case, they, out of patriotic enthusiasm, perform the operation. The other day in New York a man in a fit was found lying in the street. The policeman searched his pockets to discover who he was, and found a card on which was written: "If I am picked up in a fit, kindly do not remove the appendix. Mine has been removed twice already!"

Wonders of Chemistry.

Modern chemistry has produced such changes in the colourings of many of our stones and minerals that it is possible to imitate many of them and to improve upon nearly all. Any coloured onyx can be obtained by simple chemical processes, and the common dull colours of this stone can be converted into brilliant hues, thus greatly increasing the value. Not only can the whole stone be made to change colour, but sections and lines of it can be made to assume a red, black, yellow, or white colour, while the rest is pure white or black. Agates are easily converted into an onyx-like substance and character, which lapidaries use for cameos and intaglios.

£4 for Sewing a Button.

If they know how to make dresses in Paris, it would appear that they know how to charge also. A lady who has paid her dressmaker £12,400 in the course of four years applied for a reduction of £500 in the charge for repairs and alterations, which it was contended was excessive. One of the items disputed was £4 for repairs, which consisted of simply sewing on a button; and another was £30 for slight alteration of a dress. The court adjourned the case for expert opinion. There may, therefore, be another side to the dispute. As the matter stands, however, the lady appears to have some reason to complain.

The Old Lady and the Incubator.

An old lady visiting an exhibition went to see some incubators which were on show, and complaining of the expense of keeping fowls, said that, if they were cheaper, she would buy an egg-hatching machine. After she had asked various questions, the gentleman in attendance proceeded to show her the drawers in which were deposited the eggs in different stages. On these the old lady looked in astonishment. "What," she exclaimed indignantly; "do you use eggs?" "Certainly," was the attendant's astonished answer. "Well," said she, "I consider it a perfect swindle—to pick the pockets of honest, hard-working folks by selling them those frauds! Why, anybody can hatch chickens with eggs! I can do it myself!"

Sparrow-Feeding Contest.

It is proposed to organise a sparrow-feeding competition in the Tuileries Gardens in Paris. Prizes are to be awarded to those who succeed in attracting the greatest number of sparrows around them. Why not one in Hyde Park?

Too Much Brain.

An abnormal amount of brain is not necessarily an unmixed blessing. A child of five years has just died of heat apoplexy, and the doctor who made a post-mortem examination stated that the boy's brain weighed 52oz., that being heavier than the brain of an ordinary man.

Love's Messenger a Dog.

A charming Parisienne, who possesses a dainty pet dog, was lunching the other day at a fashionable restaurant. The dog was making the round of the various tables in search of dainty morsels, when he was seized by one of the lady's rejected admirers, who chalked a brief declaration of love on the dog's back. The lady relented.

Canal Worked by a Model.

A most ingenious system is employed by which the director of the Suez Canal can tell at a glance the exact position of all vessels passing through it. A model is placed in the office of Port Said, and the whole canal is worked from headquarters by means of the telegraph, the position of each ship being marked by a figure on the model. It is thus quite easy to arrange for vessels passing each other.

Teaching Policemen Law.

The police force of Montreal, Canada, will soon be in a position to conduct a case in court provided they study hard enough. Chief Legault has succeeded in having a portion of the police appropriations set aside for the purpose of hiring an instructor who will deliver lectures to the members of the force once a week on both civil and criminal law as it concerns their duties.

Reserved for English Visitors.

Some of the leading men in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, New York, have raised a fund to set apart for five years the best pew in the church for the English visitors who, Sunday by Sunday, find their way to the scene of Henry Ward Beecher's historic ministry. An English flag has been placed under a glass cover, and a plate bearing the words, "Reserved for English visitors," has been attached to the pew. As is well known, a pew in St. Margaret's, Westminster, is thus reserved for American visitors.

500 Miles of Tramways.

Manchester has the reputation of being one of the largest distributing centres in the world; it can now lay claim to be connected with one of the largest systems of tramways in the world. With the completion of the Corporation system of electric cars, with its 150 miles of track, the Manchester citizen can now be carried from the centre of Cottonopolis over something like 500 miles of track, over the borders into Cheshire, and right up to the Yorkshire boundary. Most of the leading towns in Lancashire are now connected by tramway with Manchester, and the railway companies are beginning to feel the competition.

Education by Railway Time-tables.

The German headmaster who has introduced the study of railway time-tables into his school, is only, it appears, following, consciously or unconsciously, an English example. At an English school kept at Godalming some years ago by two sisters the children were each given a Bradshaw, and were told to find trains that, for instance, must leave Hull after eight a.m. and get to Torquay that day, or from Eastbourne to Lancaster. The teachers contended it not only gave the children a knowledge of England, but also the distances between different towns. It also was of great use in after life, for when grown up the children taught at this school became men-servants or ladies'-maids.

Housebuilding by Machinery.

A recent Canadian invention consists of bricklaying by machinery instead of by hand. The machine, worked by two men and a lad, will lay 400 to 600 bricks per hour. Door and window spaces cause only a slight delay. The machine is suited for all plain work, such as walls, sheds, mills, factories, rows of cottages, and piers of bridges. Considerable pressure is put on the bricks, and it is claimed that the work is more firmly done than by hand. The invention will do the work of six or seven skilled bricklayers, and it is believed that a machine adapted to build a factory covering about sixty by forty feet could be put on the market for £100. The apparatus can be readily worked after a fortnight's instruction.

What to Do with Old Hats.

If you want to make the best use of any old hats that you may have, you should take them to the Nicobar Islands. There you will be received with enthusiasm, for the people who live in these islands have quite a passion for them. Everyone likes them, and everyone tries to get as many as he can. On a fine morning, the sea round about these islands may be seen dotted with canoes in each of which is a savage, with nothing at all on but a strip of cloth round his waist and a tall hat. And the funny part of it is that old hats are very much more sought after than new ones; the Nicobar natives regard new hats with suspicion and dislike. So, if you have any old hats, you had better start off with them at once to the Nicobar Islands.

The Most Versatile Engliahman.

Many holiday-makers on Dartmoor must have noticed a signboard over the door of a thatched cottage in the village of Belstone, near Okehampton, which announces that the occupier, William Ellis, is a "photographer," sells "views of the neighbourhood," is a "Dartmoor guide," "repairs watches and clocks," is a "chemical manure and seed merchant," "Port Reeve of the Manor of Belstone," and officiates in many other capacities. But this signboard by no means exhausts the list of his manifold accomplishments and official appointments. He is also churchwarden, organist, bellringer, lay reader, overseer of the poor, dog breeder (specialist in red setters), dealer in game, and, last but not least, Knight of Honour and Warden of the Primrose League. This paragon of versatility is a bachelor, lives quite alone, does all his own housework, and is a very zealous Churchman.

Have you read "The Adventures of Nell Gwyn," the famous actress, price 6d.?

I Try To Do as Paris Does

Mr. P. Doubleyou's Last Days in Paris.

How does Paris go to work? That was the question which struck me one morning when I happened to wake at something approaching my normal London hour. I would arise and go forth to witness that familiar ceaseless stream of men and women into the city, which I supposed was very much the same all the world over in big capitals. So, not waiting an hour or so for my *café*, I donned business-looking clothes, and sneaked down the hotel corridors breakfastless into the street.

First, let me say, Paris appears to get in motion very early. Even at this hour—it must have been about half-past eight—there was a ceaseless roll of cabs and 'buses.

But where should I best see my incoming business crowd? I thought the roads leading to the Bourse and the commercial neighbourhood adjoining it would best suit my purpose, and decided to station myself there after partaking of some slight refreshments.

I Get my "Breakfast."

I went into a small café near the Rue de Rivoli, and ordered *café cognac*. Now, had I entered a London coffee-house at this hour, I doubt if a soul would have been visible. But not so in early Paris—Paris, as it were, in curl papers. Many men, and women, too, well-dressed ones, were partaking of similar refreshment.

For my coffee, cognac, and two rolls, I paid about fivepence.

Now, as to working Paris. I looked in vain for the spruce, top-hatted individual we know as the City clerk, and who swarms into the City between nine and half-past in London. There appeared to be nothing like London's delirious rush to work over here. A desultory current of ordinary-looking persons passed slowly along the chief streets. There was no top hat even visible. All Paris business people looked to me exactly the same, and walked to their offices at a very casual pace. And, to my surprise, there were almost as many women as men—well-dressed ones, too—trudging to their daily work.

Then I found out why I had missed the Paris working crowd. The French capital starts work much earlier than London. The people I had seen were laggards. While we generally commence at between nine-thirty and ten, Paris is hard at it by eight o'clock—that is to say, the commercial working class of Paris.

The Parisian Working Hours.

Work is continued until twelve o'clock, when all good Parisians adjourn for lunch—or *déjeuner*, as it is called. A very large class partake of an appetiser before the meal, such as absinthe, or some kind of syrup.

At eleven o'clock I expected to be able to see the Bourse thronged with eager and excited stockbrokers, but here again I found my English ideas had brought me wrong so far as Paris is concerned. Instead of finding the building thronged at this hour, most of the business men seemed to be partaking of some sort of meal in the adjacent cafés. In some, to my astonishment, as I thought of the London business thoroughfares at this time, men and women sat in the cafés actually playing dominoes.

As I afterwards discovered, the Bourse is open from twelve to three. The French stockbroker or merchant goes to his office at about 10.30, proceeds to lunch less than an hour after, and at twelve goes to the Bourse. At three he adjourns to his office again, and at five clears out, either to journey home to the suburbs, or, as is more popular in Paris, to the café for the *apéritif* (appetiser).

The less fortunate clerk, however, continues working till twelve, goes to lunch, returns at 1.30, or thereabouts, and works again until six or seven. He does not have tea.

I Cannot get Lunch.

Not knowing these mysteries, I proceeded at about two o'clock and ordered lunch. I went to the Restaurant Duval—one of a large number of most admirable establishments in Paris, where one gets a really good lunch at an alarmingly moderate tariff.

But at two o'clock I found the restaurant empty, and sweeping in process. To get lunch would evidently mean revolution in the arrangements of the establishment, so I trooped over to the English restaurant, where my "two o'clock" would not be misunderstood.

After this, I went to a neighbouring café and ordered absinthe.

The waiter looked rather surprised, and said:

"Monsieur take absinthe at this hour?"

I felt rather abashed, and said:

"Yes; do you object?"

Then an Englishman, sitting near, said:

"They don't usually take it now, you know, but wait till five or six. I wouldn't have it yet, if I were you."

So, blushing heavily, I countermanded the order, and decided to wait.

At five o'clock I resumed my quest of the insidious liquid, and decided on the Café de la Paix for the purpose.

A green liquid was brought me, and on being asked if I would take it with sugar, the waiter placed two oblong lumps of it on the top of a strainer, and poured on to it fitful drops of water, until, in time, the absinthe had been well diluted. It was by this time a dirty muddy colour, and reminded me of cough mixture, particularly the odour it gave forth.

Then I tasted it. Surely such nursery-tasting fluid could not wreak all the social evils that are attributed to absinthe? It passed my comprehension to account for it until a few moments had followed my own sampling of it. I don't know what it is, but there is something about the appearance of this sickly-looking fluid which seems to blend with the Paris atmosphere—something insidious and demoralising. And the effects of it are even more in keeping. To me the boulevard seemed suddenly to have assumed a dazed activity. What had before been mere men and women now seemed to become electrically charged sprites. The sun suddenly bursts through the boulevard trees, and a drowsy, contented feeling comes over one. I lazily watch a youth performing conjuring tricks on the pavement, and another trying to sell photographs and newspapers, and, feeling that all that is now necessary is a copy of a rabid, boulevard newspaper, I buy La Patrie, and murmur, almost unconsciously, "Down with England."

The Effect of Absinthe.

Flaring headlines announce "The British Peril." I wonder if Britain has suddenly challenged France to war, and, if so, how long they will give me to get to the frontier—one does not reason much after taking absinthe—but find that all that has happened is some difference of opinion with a consul at a place in Algeria, called Fa-del-Allah. I breathe again, and take more absinthe.

A little later, and Paris dines. I choose a restaurant much frequented by what I had been given to understand was the "gay world." The gaiety seems to consist of the presence of a French lady of unquestionable respectability, and an even more respectable gentleman with a beard.

I ordered lobster salad, and then a strange thing happened. The waiter, after quoting "lobster salad," said something or other.

To what effect I did not know, but supposing him to be commenting on the weather, I said "*Oui*." In a few moments he returned, and inserted in the table at which I was sitting two flaps, thus almost doubling the size.

I Dine.

I wondered what was going to happen, but had long since given up trying to understand the manœuvrings of French waiters. Next he placed four sets of knives and forks, four sets of wine glasses, and—I saw him and another waiter coming in the distance with four dishes of lobster salad, and goodness knows what else.

I thought this was no place for me. Evidently he had thought I was the organiser of a Cook's tour, and advance agent for a supper party. Furtively seizing my hat, I steered myself behind a palm, and escaped out of the door. I did not feel strong enough to face the situation.

After I had dined under safer circumstances, a friend told me he would take me to the strangest place I had ever seen in my life. We got into a cab and drove for about a mile, when we got out at what looked like one of the penny gaffs of old time. It was called the "Café of Heaven and Hell." The Parisian idea of the former is certainly curious. A very shoddy, drab-coloured apartment, decorated here and there with most unpleasant figures of alleged saints and angels, while a gentleman, attired in a winged costume, discourses something in French, with a sanctimonious leer. All the while persons are invited by enterprising persons, clad as angels, to partake of liquid refreshment. This unsavoury caricature is followed by some tableaux vivants of the wearisome kind familiar to all Paris café concerts, and one withdraws to witness the Paris idea of the "other place."

A Curious Café.

This is undoubtedly more amusing, and less offensive. Demons, serpents, and other emblems of horror decorate the walls here, and a plausible idea is given of the cheap notion of the inferno.

This is followed by an entertainment in which, by means of mirrors, persons are transformed before the eyes of the audience into all sorts of fantastic shapes. Thinking to undergo the treatment myself, I went round to see what would happen to me. I was escorted by some enterprising demons to a position in the middle of the stage, and was asked to fix my head within a certain space. I stood surveying the audience critically from this position, and observed that they were all gazing at me with horror-stricken eyes.

I afterwards learnt that I had been merely burnt up for the benefit of the spectators, and, for some reason or another, the gentleman who represented the Prince of Darkness seemed highly satisfied with the performance, for he shook a demoniacal claw with me in the most friendly of fashions.

[Mr. P. Doubleyou is at present acting as a valet to an old gentleman. His experiences will be told next week.]

OUR BEST FRIEND, THE VOLCANO.

Eruptions do the Country a Lot of Good.

The crops of the country round Vesuvius were spoilt this last spring by rain charged with hydrochloric acid. But it is the first time such a thing has happened for more than thirty years, and this very acid, in the small amounts which the volcano usually gives off, has been largely responsible for the enormous crops which this district usually yields.

The slopes of Mount Vesuvius produce, in fact, nearly treble the crops which other neighbouring parts of Italy can be made to yield, and this is only one of a hundred such districts which owe their fertility to the soil being composed of crumbled lava.

Even the dust which volcanoes eject is often extremely valuable to the farmers upon whose land it falls. In 1812, a violent eruption of La Souffrière, the great St. Vincent volcano which has recently given so much trouble, covered the whole of Barbadoes with some two inches of ashes. At the time Barbadoes was suffering from a fearful plague of red ants, which rendered some parts of the island almost uninhabitable. The dust absolutely destroyed these pests, and not only that, but doubled the crop of sugar cane the next year. The fertilising effects of that dust were visible up to the year 1830.

Not even the great rivers of the world can compare in fertilising powers with volcanic outbursts. Tombora, at its last great eruption, emitted enough dust to have covered the whole of Germany two feet deep, and the dust greatly improved the land it fell upon.

But others besides farmers owe much to the action of volcanoes. Does it occur to you that warfare and sport as practised during the past three or four centuries would have been impossible but for volcanoes? Gunpowder's most important ingredient is sulphur, and sulphur is purely a volcanic product.

Another most indispensable product of volcanic action is gypsum, better known as plaster of Paris. Sculptors, cast-makers, and surgeons alike, would be lost without this substance. Builders, too, make great use of stones which owe their hardness to having been brought up molten from the depths of the earth by volcanoes. The "tuff" of which Naples is built is an old lava of Vesuvius. Basalt is another volcanic stone.

All those beautiful veined or semi-transparent stones known as chalcedony, porphyry, and jasper have been formed by heat, and thrown up into our reach by volcanoes. Clay has been found turned into jasper simply by the heat of a lava stream which has passed over it. Felspar and hornblende are other well-known and valuable volcanic products.

The domestic use of pumice stone is too well known to need description. Pumice is also employed in many of the arts and crafts, for instance, by painters to remove old paint from timber. Hundreds of people gain a livelihood digging pumice from the volcanic district of middle Italy. Mention must also be made of rock crystal, so valuable for fine lenses. This is a sort of bye-product of the great volcano factories.

Mr. Rhodes would probably never have been a millionaire but for volcanoes. The great bed of blue clay at Kimberley, from which practically the whole of the world's supply of diamonds is now procured, is nothing but the core of an ancient, worn out volcano. A diamond is only a bit of carbon which has been crystallised by almost unimaginable heat and pressure. The volcano has done easily what all the art of man can hardly succeed in imitating.

The volcano is the doctors' greatest ally. When the patient is gouty he is sent to Homburg, or, his digestion wrong, to Carlsbad. If he has a skin affection he is ordered to Bath. At all these and many other similar places he finds warm springs charged with mineral agents of one kind or another. The waters are heated in Nature's own boilers, warmed by similar rents in the earth's crusts to those which communicate with the craters of volcanoes. Usually, indeed, so far as scientists can say, these springs occupy the sites of volcanoes which perished millions of years ago, and their waters are medicated with the mineral substances brought up from great depths by these ancient escape valves of the central fire.

Probably we should be entirely without mineral oil had the earth's crust been thick enough to effectually cut off the heat of the earth's core. Petroleum is supposed to have been distilled from buried vegetable matter by combined heat and pressure.

But, indeed, had there never been any trace of volcanic energy on this globe of ours we ourselves should most certainly never have existed. For it is solely owing to the action of volcanoes that the continents have been lifted to their present height above the water. Were the earth smooth all its surface would be covered by about 200 fathoms of water.

A gentleman who was staying at a seaside hotel during the summer expressed his dissatisfaction to his landlady of the heavy charges in his bill.

"Well, you see," she said, "our season is so very short that we are obliged to make hay while the sun shines."

"That may be all very true, my good woman," replied the visitor, "but though I know all flesh is grass, I decidedly object to being made hay of."

The best, the cheapest, that money can buy, only one shilling—Pearson's Gossipy Guides.

Ballet of Skeletons.

An interesting exhibition is being arranged in Vienna for next year under the presidency of the celebrated inventor Sczepanik, which will bring forward all the great discoveries of the last twenty years. Sczepanik himself is the inventor of a new method of tapestry-making which will revolutionise the art. Among other attractions will be a ballet of skeletons, arranged by means of X-rays directed on a real corps de ballet hidden from the public.

Twenty-one Horses Shot Under Him.

If Commandant Moller, now a Boer prisoner in Southern India, is to be taken literally, he has certainly established a peculiar war record of his own. He is reported to have said that he had no fewer than twenty-one horses shot under him, and was never touched once.

Utilising an Illness.

A Kentucky farmer caught a fever. His wife was told to keep him quiet in bed. She was a practical woman, and so packed him in with three dozen new-laid eggs, and warned him not to move lest he break them. The fever ran its course of twenty-one days. The farmer recovered, and six-and-thirty healthy young chickens were hatched out.

The Journalists' Paradise.

Copenhagen is an ideal city for hard-working journalists. A daily paper in the Danish capital announced at the beginning of last month it would suspend publication during July, August, and September, in order that the staff might enjoy a long summer holiday. Its readers were told to look for its reappearance in October with fresh pleasure and expectation.

Alarming American Railway Records.

In the past three months, during which time exceptionally speedy "flyers" have been put in operation by many of the American railways, there have been 813 persons killed and 9,958 injured in railway accidents. In the same period there have been 1,220 collisions and 838 derailments. Suits are pending against railways by persons injured or by the relatives of persons killed for a total amount of nearly £50,000,000.

Easily Caught.

Pretended deafness is readily exposed by a simple device, which is often resorted to by the Parisian authorities. Six men there recently tried to escape conscription, but they subsequently betrayed themselves. One man was informed that he might stroll about the barrack yard, a portion of which was paved with stone. A few minutes later a coin was adroitly dropped behind him, and its musical jingle caused him to turn to look for it. The same trick was tried with each of the other five, and succeeded in every case.

Saint Cuthbert's Comb.

It was formerly the custom to bury combs with the dead—which clearly shows that these articles of the toilet had sacred significance in the eyes of the people of the old world. The comb buried with St. Cuthbert, and now preserved at Durham, is of ivory and measures six and a quarter inches in length and four and a half inches in width. It is ascribed to the eleventh century, and has a double row of teeth, divided by a broad, plain band, perforated in the middle with a round hole for the finger.

Motor Ascends a Tower.

Everybody who has visited Copenhagen knows the old Round Tower, with its winding "stepless" stairway to the top. It is 120 feet high, and tradition has it that Tsar Peter the Great once drove up to the top in a four-horse vehicle. The stairway is about twelve feet wide only, and it was therefore a novel and remarkable feat performed by a motor-car driver, who one morning quite recently, drove his car up to the top in one minute. The only danger attached to the ride is the possible damage which the car may suffer in colliding with the wall. The feat of steering it round and round within the limited space is difficult to accomplish.

Electric Battery in a Man.

Anybody who shakes hands with Henry Longman of Summerville, Pa., gets an electric shock of confusing power. Three years ago, while peeling tanbark, he was struck by lightning and has ever since possessed the queer power of transmitting an electric shock to everything he touches. By passing a blade of a knife between his thumb and finger during the process of a storm he charges the metal so strongly that heavy weights can be lifted. When flies alight upon him they drop dead, and when he is in a dark room his eyes shine like incandescent lights. Whenever a storm approaches Longman becomes so strongly charged with electricity that it is dangerous to touch him. He says he feels no inconvenience except that he dare not go near a moving locomotive for fear of being drawn against it and killed.

For the Benefit of Ugly Girls.

Germany is ahead in novelties of a charitable nature. In the town of Haschmann prizes are offered yearly for the men who will marry the ugliest, most crippled, and the women over forty who have been jilted at least twice. The money was left by a big financier, and he, realising that beauty is an attraction hard to overcome, made a provision in his will that out of the income of the fund not less than sixteen pounds shall go with the ugliest girl in any year, and the cripple shall receive twelve pounds. The poor women over forty who have been jilted by a lover receive, when the funds will permit, ten pounds each, but the trustee can vary this amount, and, at his own discretion, offer a larger prize to someone who will marry an unusually ugly girl, or one to whom nature has been specially unkind.

Crying Contest.

At a "crying contest" recently held in Chicago in the presence of 200 interested spectators, a Miss Green set up a unique record by shedding thirty-one tears in five minutes. A Miss Webb came second, although she failed to shed more than nineteen tears in the same time.

Rats in a Post Office.

From Tunis it is reported that the post-office there has lately been infested by thousands of rats, which gnaw at and destroy the letters. A troop of cats introduced by the authorities have not succeeded in driving the rats away, and the postmaster advises the public to inclose their letters in small metallic tubes!

Spontaneous Combustion.

"Spontaneous combustion" was the medical verdict upon the case of Charles Page, a workman, who was found in flames at two o'clock in the morning in the streets of Geneva. He was known as a heavy drinker, and there were no traces of pipe, tobacco, or matches among the *débris* of charred clothing.

Europe's Densest Population.

The Belgian Government has just issued a statistical report showing that the population of Belgium is the densest in Europe, there being 605 persons to every square mile, as against 410 in Holland and 349 in England. There are still over 12 per cent. of Belgian soldiers who can neither read nor write.

Crow as Electrician.

A crow has been getting the Calcutta Telephone Company into trouble. It built its nest at the central office where four wires converged, and used tin clippings and bits of wire for the purpose, with the result that it established complete electrical communication between the whole of the four lines. When a subscriber rang up someone he wanted he was answered from four different offices at once.

An Impossible Task.

A telegram from Simla makes the announcement that "It is intended to inoculate six million men and women in the Punjaub, thirty-seven private doctors being imported from England on liberal terms as inoculators. The sanction of the Secretary of State is required." Evidently, seeing that if the doctors inoculated 100 a day, it would take the thirty-seven several centuries to get through their work.

Cosmopolitan Labour.

It is curious how the various races of humanity on the New South Wales opal fields make certain lines of trade peculiarly their own. The Chinese are well represented among the storekeepers. The camel drivers are all Afghans, the bullock drivers are true sons of Britannia's Southern Empire. The saloon owners are generally English or Scotch, the lucky man who finds stones is usually an Irishman, and the buyers are all either Germans or Jews.

French Red Tape.

M. Curet, the President of the Marseilles Tribunal, is a pluralist and a stickler for red tape. Quite recently he had, as president, to obtain permission from the chairman of the municipality for some trifling formality. Now M. Curet is also the chairman of the municipality. So he wrote to himself, politely asking his own permission, and duly replied to himself, amiably granting to himself the permission requested. The exigencies of red tape were thus fully complied with.

Didn't Want Another Operation.

The operation for appendicitis is an American invention, and the doctors across the water are proud of it. So much so indeed that, according to popular report, whenever there is any doubt as to the diagnosis of a case, they, out of patriotic enthusiasm, perform the operation. The other day in New York a man in a fit was found lying in the street. The policeman searched his pockets to discover who he was, and found a card on which was written: "If I am picked up in a fit, kindly do not remove the appendix. Mine has been removed twice already!"

Wonders of Chemistry.

Modern chemistry has produced such changes in the colourings of many of our stones and minerals that it is possible to imitate many of them and to improve upon nearly all. Any coloured onyx can be obtained by simple chemical processes, and the common dull colours of this stone can be converted into brilliant hues, thus greatly increasing the value. Not only can the whole stone be made to change colour, but sections and lines of it can be made to assume a red, black, yellow, or white colour, while the rest is pure white or black. Agates are easily converted into an onyx-like substance and character, which lapidaries use for cameos and intaglios.

£4 for Sewing a Button.

If they know how to make dresses in Paris, it would appear that they know how to charge also. A lady who has paid her dressmaker £12,400 in the course of four years applied for a reduction of £500 in the charge for repairs and alterations, which it was contended was excessive. One of the items disputed was £4 for repairs, which consisted of simply sewing on a button; and another was £30 for slight alteration of a dress. The court adjourned the case for expert opinion. There may, therefore, be another side to the dispute. As the matter stands, however, the lady appears to have some reason to complain.

The Old Lady and the Incubator.

An old lady visiting an exhibition went to see some incubators which were on show, and complaining of the expense of keeping fowls, said that, if they were cheaper, she would buy an egg-hatching machine. After she had asked various questions, the gentleman in attendance proceeded to show her the drawers in which were deposited the eggs in different stages. On these the old lady looked in astonishment. "What," she exclaimed indignantly; "do you use eggs?" "Certainly," was the attendant's astonished answer. "Well," said she, "I consider it a perfect swindle—to pick the pockets of honest, hard-working folks by selling them those frauds! Why, anybody can hatch chickens with eggs! I can do it myself!"

Sparrow-Feeding Contest.

It is proposed to organise a sparrow-feeding competition in the Tuileries Gardens in Paris. Prizes are to be awarded to those who succeed in attracting the greatest number of sparrows around them. Why not one in Hyde Park?

Too Much Brain.

An abnormal amount of brain is not necessarily an unmixed blessing. A child of five years has just died of heat apoplexy, and the doctor who made a post-mortem examination stated that the boy's brain weighed 32ozs., that being heavier than the brain of an ordinary man.

Love's Messenger a Dog.

A charming Parisienne, who possesses a dainty pet dog, was lunching the other day at a fashionable restaurant. The dog was making the round of the various tables in search of dainty morsels, when he was seized by one of the lady's rejected admirers, who chalked a brief declaration of love on the dog's back. The lady relented.

Canal Worked by a Model.

A most ingenious system is employed by which the director of the Suez Canal can tell at a glance the exact position of all vessels passing through it. A model is placed in the office of Port Said, and the whole canal is worked from headquarters by means of the telegraph, the position of each ship being marked by a figure on the model. It is thus quite easy to arrange for vessels passing each other.

Teaching Policemen Law.

The police force of Montreal, Canada, will soon be in a position to conduct a case in court provided they study hard enough. Chief Legault has succeeded in having a portion of the police appropriations set aside for the purpose of hiring an instructor who will deliver lectures to the members of the force once a week on both civil and criminal law as it concerns their duties.

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A recent Canadian invention consists of bricklaying by machinery instead of by hand. The machine, worked by two men and a lad, will lay 400 to 600 bricks per hour. Door and window spaces cause only a slight delay. The machine is suited for all plain work, such as walls, sheds, mills, factories, rows of cottages, and piers of bridges. Considerable pressure is put on the bricks, and it is claimed that the work is more firmly done than by hand. The invention will do the work of six or seven skilled bricklayers, and it is believed that a machine adapted to build a factory covering about sixty by forty feet could be put on the market for £100. The apparatus can be readily worked after a fortnight's instruction.

What to Do with Old Hats.

If you want to make the best use of any old hats that you may have, you should take them to the Nicobar Islands. There you will be received with enthusiasm, for the people who live in these islands have quite a passion for them. Everyone likes them, and everyone tries to get as many as he can. On a fine morning, the sea round about these islands may be seen dotted with canoes in each of which is a savage, with nothing at all on but a strip of cloth round his waist and a tall hat. And the funny part of it is that old hats are very much more sought after than new ones; the Nicobar natives regard new hats with suspicion and dislike. So, if you have any old hats, you had better start off with them at once to the Nicobar Islands.

The Most Versatile Englishman.

Many holiday-makers on Dartmoor must have noticed a signboard over the door of a thatched cottage in the village of Belstone, near Okehampton, which announces that the occupier, William Ellis, is a "photographer," sells "views of the neighbourhood," is a "Dartmoor guide," "repairs watches and clocks," is a "chemical manure and seed merchant," "Port Reeve of the Manor of Belstone," and officiates in many other capacities. But this signboard by no means exhausts the list of his manifold accomplishments and official appointments. He is also churchwarden, organist, bellringer, lay reader, overseer of the poor, dog breeder (specialist in red setters), dealer in game, and, last but not least, Knight of Honour and Warden of the Primrose League. This paragon of versatility is a bachelor, lives quite alone, does all his own housework, and is a very zealous Churchman.

Have you read "The Adventures of Nell Gwyn," the famous actress, price 6d.?

I Try To Do as Paris Does

Mr. P. Doubleyou's Last Days in Paris.

How does Paris go to work? That was the question which struck me one morning when I happened to wake at something approaching my normal London hour. I would arise and go forth to witness that familiar ceaseless stream of men and women into the city, which I supposed was very much the same all the world over in big capitals. So, not waiting an hour or so for my *café*, I donned business-looking clothes, and sneaked down the hotel corridors breakfastless into the street.

First, let me say, Paris appears to get in motion very early. Even at this hour—it must have been about half-past eight—there was a ceaseless roll of cabs and 'buses.

But where should I best see my incoming business crowd? I thought the roads leading to the Bourse and the commercial neighbourhood adjoining it would best suit my purpose, and decided to station myself there after partaking of some slight refreshments.

I Get my "Breakfast."

I went into a small café near the Rue de Rivoli, and ordered *café cognac*. Now, had I entered a London coffee-house at this hour, I doubt if a soul would have been visible. But not so in early Paris—Paris, as it were, in curl papers. Many men, and women, too, well-dressed ones, were partaking of similar refreshment.

For my coffee, cognac, and two rolls, I paid about fivepence.

Now, as to working Paris. I looked in vain for the spruce, top-hatted individual we know as the City clerk, and who swarms into the City between nine and half-past in London. There appeared to be nothing like London's delirious rush to work over here. A desultory current of ordinary-looking persons passed slowly along the chief streets. There was no top hat even visible. All Paris business people looked to me exactly the same, and walked to their offices at a very casual pace. And, to my surprise, there were almost as many women as men—well-dressed ones, too—trudging to their daily work.

Then I found out why I had missed the Paris working crowd. The French capital starts work much earlier than London. The people I had seen were laggards. While we generally commence at between nine-thirty and ten, Paris is hard at it by eight o'clock—that is to say, the commercial working class of Paris.

The Parisian Working Hours.

Work is continued until twelve o'clock, when all good Parisians adjourn for lunch—or *déjeuner*, as it is called. A very large class partake of an appetiser before the meal, such as absinthe, or some kind of syrup.

At eleven o'clock I expected to be able to see the Bourse thronged with eager and excited stockbrokers, but here again I found my English ideas had brought me wrong so far as Paris is concerned. Instead of finding the building thronged at this hour, most of the business men seemed to be partaking of some sort of meal in the adjacent cafés. In some, to my astonishment, as I thought of the London business thoroughfares at this time, men and women sat in the cafés actually playing dominoes.

As I afterwards discovered, the Bourse is open from twelve to three. The French stockbroker or merchant goes to his office at about 10.30, proceeds to lunch less than an hour after, and at twelve goes to the Bourse. At three he adjourns to his office again, and at five clears out, either to journey home to the suburbs, or, as is more popular in Paris, to the café for the *apéritif* (appetiser).

The less fortunate clerk, however, continues working till twelve, goes to lunch, returns at 1.30, or thereabouts, and works again until six or seven. He does not have tea.

I Cannot get Lunch.

Not knowing these mysteries, I proceeded at about two o'clock and ordered lunch. I went to the Restaurant Duval—one of a large number of most admirable establishments in Paris, where one gets a really good lunch at an alarmingly moderate tariff.

But at two o'clock I found the restaurant empty, and sweeping in process. To get lunch would evidently mean revolution in the arrangements of the establishment, so I trooped over to the English restaurant, where my "two o'clock" would not be misunderstood.

After this, I went to a neighbouring café and ordered absinthe.

The waiter looked rather surprised, and said:

"Monsieur take absinthe at this hour?"

I felt rather abashed, and said:

"Yes; do you object?"

Then an Englishman, sitting near, said:

"They don't usually take it now, you know, but wait till five or six. I wouldn't have it yet, if I were you."

So, blushing heavily, I countermanded the order, and decided to wait.

At five o'clock I resumed my quest of the insidious liquid, and decided on the Café de la Paix for the purpose.

A green liquid was brought me, and on being asked if I would take it with sugar, the waiter placed two oblong lumps of it on the top of a strainer, and poured on to it fitful drops of water, until, in time, the absinthe had been well diluted. It was by this time a dirty muddy colour, and reminded me of cough mixture, particularly the odour it gave forth.

Then I tasted it. Surely such nursery-tasting fluid could not wreak all the social evils that are attributed to absinthe? It passed my comprehension to account for it until a few moments had followed my own sampling of it. I don't know what it is, but there is something about the appearance of this sickly-looking fluid which seems to blend with the Paris atmosphere—something insidious and demoralising. And the effects of it are even more in keeping. To me the boulevard seemed suddenly to have assumed a dazed activity. What had before been mere men and women now seemed to become electrically charged sprites. The sun suddenly bursts through the boulevard trees, and a drowsy, contented feeling comes over one. I lazily watch a youth performing conjuring tricks on the pavement, and another trying to sell photographs and newspapers, and, feeling that all that is now necessary is a copy of a rabid, boulevard newspaper, I buy La Patrie, and murmur, almost unconsciously, "Down with England."

The Effect of Absinthe.

Flaring headlines announce "The British Peril." I wonder if Britain has suddenly challenged France to war, and, if so, how long they will give me to get to the frontier—one does not reason much after taking absinthe—but find that all that has happened is some difference of opinion with a consul at a place in Algeria, called Fa-del-Allah. I breathe again, and take more absinthe.

A little later, and Paris dines. I choose a restaurant much frequented by what I had been given to understand was the "gay world." The gaiety seems to consist of the presence of a French lady of unquestionable respectability, and an even more respectable gentleman with a beard.

I ordered lobster salad, and then a strange thing happened. The waiter, after quoting "lobster salad," said something or other.

To what effect I did not know, but supposing him to be commenting on the weather, I said "*Oui.*" In a few moments he returned, and inserted in the table at which I was sitting two flaps, thus almost doubling the size.

I Dine.

I wondered what was going to happen, but had long since given up trying to understand the manœuvrings of French waiters. Next he placed four sets of knives and forks, four sets of wine glasses, and—I saw him and another waiter coming in the distance with four dishes of lobster salad, and goodness knows what else.

I thought this was no place for me. Evidently he had thought I was the organiser of a Cook's tour, and advance agent for a supper party. Furtively seizing my hat, I steered myself behind a palm, and escaped out of the door. I did not feel strong enough to face the situation.

After I had dined under safer circumstances, a friend told me he would take me to the strangest place I had ever seen in my life. We got into a cab and drove for about a mile, when we got out at what looked like one of the penny gaffs of old time. It was called the "Café of Heaven and Hell." The Parisian idea of the former is certainly curious. A very shoddy, drab-coloured apartment, decorated here and there with most unpleasant figures of alleged saints and angels, while a gentleman, attired in a winged costume, discourses something in French, with a sanctimonious leer. All the while persons are invited by enterprising persons, clad as angels, to partake of liquid refreshment. This unsavoury caricature is followed by some tableaux vivants of the wearisome kind familiar to all Paris café concerts, and one withdraws to witness the Paris idea of the "other place."

A Curious Café.

This is undoubtedly more amusing, and less offensive. Demons, serpents, and other emblems of horror decorate the walls here, and a plausible idea is given of the cheap notion of the inferno.

This is followed by an entertainment in which, by means of mirrors, persons are transformed before the eyes of the audience into all sorts of fantastic shapes. Thinking to undergo the treatment myself, I went round to see what would happen to me. I was escorted by some enterprising demons to a position in the middle of the stage, and was asked to fix my head within a certain space. I stood surveying the audience critically from this position, and observed that they were all gazing at me with horror-stricken eyes.

I afterwards learnt that I had been merely burnt up for the benefit of the spectators, and, for some reason or another, the gentleman who represented the Prince of Darkness seemed highly satisfied with the performance, for he shook a demoniacal claw with me in the most friendly of fashions.

[Mr. P. Doubleyou is at present acting as a valet to an old gentleman. His experiences will be told next week.]

OUR BEST FRIEND, THE VOLCANO.

Eruptions do the Country a Lot of Good.

The crops of the country round Vesuvius were spoilt this last spring by rain charged with hydrochloric acid. But it is the first time such a thing has happened for more than thirty years, and this very acid, in the small amounts which the volcano usually gives off, has been largely responsible for the enormous crops which this district usually yields.

The slopes of Mount Vesuvius produce, in fact, nearly treble the crops which other neighbouring parts of Italy can be made to yield, and this is only one of a hundred such districts which owe their fertility to the soil being composed of crumbled lava.

Even the dust which volcanoes eject is often extremely valuable to the farmers upon whose land it falls. In 1812, a violent eruption of La Souffrière, the great St. Vincent volcano which has recently given so much trouble, covered the whole of Barbadoes with some two inches of ashes. At the time Barbadoes was suffering from a fearful plague of red ants, which rendered some parts of the island almost uninhabitable. The dust absolutely destroyed these pests, and not only that, but doubled the crop of sugar cane the next year. The fertilising effects of that dust were visible up to the year 1830.

Not even the great rivers of the world can compare in fertilising powers with volcanic outbursts. Tombora, at its last great eruption, emitted enough dust to have covered the whole of Germany two feet deep, and the dust greatly improved the land it fell upon.

But others besides farmers owe much to the action of volcanoes. Does it occur to you that warfare and sport as practised during the past three or four centuries would have been impossible but for volcanoes? Gunpowder's most important ingredient is sulphur, and sulphur is purely a volcanic product.

Another most indispensable product of volcanic action is gypsum, better known as plaster of Paris. Sculptors, cast-makers, and surgeons alike, would be lost without this substance. Builders, too, make great use of stones which owe their hardness to having been brought up molten from the depths of the earth by volcanoes. The "tuff" of which Naples is built is an old lava of Vesuvius. Basalt is another volcanic stone.

All those beautiful veined or semi-transparent stones known as chalcedony, porphyry, and jasper have been formed by heat, and thrown up into our reach by volcanoes. Clay has been found turned into jasper simply by the heat of a lava stream which has passed over it. Felspar and hornblende are other well-known and valuable volcanic products.

The domestic use of pumice stone is too well known to need description. Pumice is also employed in many of the arts and crafts, for instance, by painters to remove old paint from timber. Hundreds of people gain a livelihood digging pumice from the volcanic district of middle Italy. Mention must also be made of rock crystal, so valuable for fine lenses. This is a sort of bye-product of the great volcano factories.

Mr. Rhodes would probably never have been a millionaire but for volcanoes. The great bed of blue clay at Kimberley, from which practically the whole of the world's supply of diamonds is now procured, is nothing but the core of an ancient, worn out volcano. A diamond is only a bit of carbon which has been crystallised by almost unimaginable heat and pressure. The volcano has done easily what all the art of man can hardly succeed in imitating.

The volcano is the doctors' greatest ally. When the patient is gouty he is sent to Homburg, or, his digestion wrong, to Carlsbad. If he has a skin affection he is ordered to Bath. At all these and many other similar places he finds warm springs charged with mineral agents of one kind or another. The waters are heated in Nature's own boilers, warmed by similar rents in the earth's crusts to those which communicate with the craters of volcanoes. Usually, indeed, so far as scientists can say, these springs occupy the sites of volcanoes which perished millions of years ago, and their waters are medicated with the mineral substances brought up from great depths by these ancient escape valves of the central fire.

Probably we should be entirely without mineral oil had the earth's crust been thick enough to effectually cut off the heat of the earth's core. Petroleum is supposed to have been distilled from buried vegetable matter by combined heat and pressure.

But, indeed, had there never been any trace of volcanic energy on this globe of ours we ourselves should most certainly never have existed. For it is solely owing to the action of volcanoes that the continents have been lifted to their present height above the water. Were the earth smooth all its surface would be covered by about 200 fathoms of water.

A gentleman who was staying at a seaside hotel during the summer expressed his dissatisfaction to his landlady of the heavy charges in his bill.

"Well, you see," she said, "our season is so very short that we are obliged to make hay while the sun shines."

"That may be all very true, my good woman," replied the visitor, "but though I know all flesh is grass, I decidedly object to being made hay of."

The best, the cheapest, that money can buy, only one shilling—Pearson's Gossipy Guides.

Famous School Board Children.

And Others who have Come from National and "Dame" Schools.

MR. EBENEZER CUNNINGHAM, this year's Senior Wrangler, is a board-school boy. To the Canal Road school, Hackney, belongs the honour of having imparted to him the first rudiments of an education, which was destined to be crowned by the highest honour of its particular kind that the University of Cambridge has it in its power to bestow. Mr. Cunningham's gifted brother George, too, now organist at the Alexandra Palace, was, it is interesting to note, also a Canal Road boy.

Nor are these by any means isolated instances of children having risen to high eminence in one walk of life or another, who have begun their scholastic career at the very bottom rung of the educational ladder. Some, too, there are, even, whose schooling has been not only inferior in quality, but restricted as to quantity, and who have yet lived to make their mark in the world.

Thomas Burt, for instance, the famous labour leader, and Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Trade from 1892 to 1895, only put in two years' attendance in all at a colliery village school. Nevertheless, his speeches are, of their kind, models of rugged eloquence and terse reasoning, while many of the articles which have appeared over his name in the NINETEENTH CENTURY, the FORTNIGHTLY, the CONTEMPORARY, and other similar high-class reviews, have attracted widespread attention.

"Mabon" Worked in a Coal-Mine.

Mr. Keir Hardie, again, had no regular education whatever in his boyhood, and, until his twenty-fourth year, was a working collier; yet he has, in his time, edited three newspapers, besides contributing largely to various magazines. Mr. William Abraham, M.P., known throughout South Wales as "Mabon," and who has also toiled underground in a coal mine, was a little better off, in that he managed to get a smattering of learning at the village school of Cwnavon; but it could not have amounted to much, seeing we have it on his own authority that he went to work as a collier's boy when he was only ten years of age.

Sir James Haslett, one of Belfast's most prominent citizens, was educated at the Knock National Schools. Sir William Arrol, head of the great contracting firm of William Arrol and Company, of Glasgow, which built the new Tay Bridge and the Forth Bridge, used, when quite a tiny little chap, to spend six hours a day learning his letters at one of those old-fashioned dame-schools which are now well-nigh extinct; but at the age of eight he started work as a piecer in a cotton mill, and the duration of the lessons had perforce to be cut down by one-half.

Editor was a National Schoolboy.

The National Schools, Battersea, qualified John Burns for the battle of life. Dr. Thomas Macnamara, who is, perhaps, the best all-round living authority on matters educational, was also originally a National School boy, although he afterwards migrated to the board schools as a pupil-teacher, and eventually became a full-fledged master. Dr. Macnamara is now a member of the London School Board, represents North Camberwell in the House of Commons, and edits the SCHOOLMASTER.

One of the most striking figures at the Naval and Military Club, Piccadilly, when he happens to be up in town, is Major-General Luke O'Connor, V.C. He is every inch an officer, and a gentleman of the old school, gracious, courteous, and stately. Yet he only put in about two years at an ordinary Irish village school, ere, as a lad of sixteen, he enlisted into the ranks of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. He made good use of the regimental school, however, with the result that he was promoted sergeant, and at the battle of the Alma River he earned his cross and his commission at one and the same time, by a series of striking acts of gallantry performed after he had been severely wounded.

Soldiers who have Risen.

O'Connor was, of course, an Irishman. His equally famous Scotch contemporary, Major-General "Willie" McBean, V.C., was also a "ranker," and at the time of his attestation was said to have been so unlettered as to have been unable to distinguish, to quote the quaint words of one of his contemporaries, "the difference between a B and a bull's foot." But he, too, realising to the full the advantages of education, put in his time at the regimental school instead of at the canteen, with the result that he afterwards rose to command the regiment in which he had enlisted as a recruit.

Lieutenant-General Sir Hector Macdonald, again, who has risen even higher than either O'Connor or McBean, also made free use of the regimental school when he was a private soldier; although, prior to his enlistment, like most present-day Scotch children, he had managed to pick up a fairly decent primary education from the village dominie.

The man who knows more about fungi than any other living authority is Mordecai Cubitt Cooke, for many years in charge of the herbarium at Kew Gardens. He has written over forty botanical works, nearly all of them of the most erudite character. Savants from all over the world consult him, and great foreign universities have been proud to confer upon him the highest honorary degrees in their gift. Yet his parents were humble villagers at Horning, in Norfolk, and all the schooling he got as a boy was three or four years at a penny "dame school."

The Rev. William Crockett, whose writings have delighted tens of thousands of readers, was educated at the Earlston Parish School. Walter Crane, artist and socialist, is a self-taught man; as is also Phil May, although the latter did manage, in the course of his exceedingly erratic boyhood, to put in two or three years at the National School in Leeds.

Alexander Anderson, the eminent Scotch philosopher, author and linguist, learnt his letters at the village "academy" of Crocketford, in Kircudbrightshire, but started to work in a quarry when quite a little lad, and was afterwards seventeen years a surfaceman on the Glasgow and South-Western Railway. Yet all the while he went on studying and improving his mind, and to-day he is Assistant Librarian in the University of Edinburgh, having resigned, to take up this important appointment, the post of secretary of the Edinburgh Philosophic Institution.

Millionaire's Early Struggles.

The story of the early educational struggles of one of the recipients of Coronation honours, Sir William Allan, M.P., engineer, millionaire, and poet, reads like an extract from Smiles' "Self-Help." Torn from school at the age of ten, owing to the failure of his father in business, and set to toil in an engineer's shop at a time when even younger children were worked in the ordinary course of things from six in the morning until six at night, and much longer during periods of pressure, the lad might well have been excused from giving up all thoughts of acquiring more than the mere rudiments of learning.

But the future member for Gateshead was ambitious. "Young as I was," he says, "I soon made up my mind that I would rise above the bench. Enthusiasm and determination are what carry a man through, and I have always had both. I made my own way from the first; in fact, I had to, for there was no one to give me a hand. After working hours I used to sit up by candlelight with slate and school books, learning what I could. I began Latin in this way, studying it, and puzzling it out quite alone. Nevertheless, when later on I was able to afford to go to night school, I found I could hold my own in it with the other boys."

With such a living example as this before his eyes, surely no lad, however humble or hard his lot, need despair of getting on in the world.

A CARMAN is about the only person who can drive away his customers and still keep them.

"I WANT to buy a make-up box," said the young married man.

"A make-up box?" the confectioner echoed. "We don't keep theatrical supplies."

"I mean a box of chocolates to take home to my wife. I promised to be home three hours ago."

The Poacher Scored.

A NORFOLK squire was lamenting the increase of poaching to his keeper, who told him that a man named Richards was the most notorious poacher in the neighbourhood.

Soon after the squire happened to meet Richards, who asserted that he could get game whenever he wanted it, keepers or no keepers.

Squire: "Well, if you bring me a hare to-morrow from my own estate, I'll give you a guinea for it."

"What! an' you a J.P.?"

"Oh, that'll be all right."

"Well, then, done, sir."

Next day the poacher arrived and was shown into the study.

"Well, have you got him?"

Richards opened the sack, out of which jumped a fine hare, which rushed round the room seeking to escape.

"Why haven't you killed it?"

"Because, sir," said the poacher, with a grin, "I haven't a license!"

WE give away nothing so generously, and receive nothing so reluctantly, as advice.

"I SHALL never permit myself to become a household drudge," said the bride with the honours of a University career still fresh upon her. "I shall endeavour to improve my mind."

"That is a good idea," answered her mother; "but don't let your literary pursuits monopolise you. Remember there are times when currant jelly appeals to a man a great deal more than current science."

1/- COSTS £4,000.

Big Legal Fights Over Pennies and Straws.

Four thousand pounds is a great deal of money to have to pay in order to decide the legal ownership of a shilling, but the famous theatrical manager, Mr. Albert Hamilton, was once sued by a Birmingham man named Gregg for a shilling, and the case cost the loser the enormous sum stated.

The plaintiff averred that Mr. Hamilton had knocked his arm when passing him in the street, thereby causing a shilling he held in his hand to fall to the pavement and roll down a grating, from which it was impossible to extricate it. The case was first decided against the defendant, but was subsequently passed from one court to another until the verdict of the High Court was given against the plaintiff. As nearly fifty witnesses were called during the hearing of the case which covered several months, and a dozen legal magnates were employed, it is small wonder that the plaintiff's bill stood at £4,000, though it was rather galling to lose the shilling into the bargain.

There are some people who experience a particular pleasure in quarrelling with omnibus companies as regards their fares. A few years ago, a brawny Scot was carried half a mile beyond his destination, and was compelled to pay a halfpenny extra fare. He sued the company, and got back the halfpenny, while his opponents had a bill of £45 to pay for costs.

A far more expensive case was that brought by Mr. Grogan, of Highbury, against a London omnibus company some years back. He bought a penny ticket on one 'bus, and then immediately dismounted, and entered another vehicle belonging to the same company, because he believed he would thereby reach his destination sooner. He refused to pay the extra fare demanded, so proceedings were begun against him, and he was ordered to pay a penny and £35 costs.

He appealed against this decision, and repeated the offence four times, so that there were five different cases against him, all of which he lost and appealed. When the proceedings had lasted over six months he realised that he was vanquished, but more staggering than his defeat must have been the lawyers' bill for £9,120, which came in as the result of so much litigation.

Five years ago the accounts of the Russian War Office at St. Petersburg were found to be 2s. 8d. short, and no one would claim responsibility for the missing money. The law was then set in motion, and everyone connected with the War Office, even to the highest officials, was dragged into the case and examined.

Seven months passed, and then the lost coins turned up in an old cash-box, where they had presumably been hidden for months, if not years. The last that was heard of the matter was a bill for nearly £3,500 in consequence of the useless litigation.

The Customs are not infallible, and occasionally their mistakes cost them dear. In 1845, a man drove across the Scotch border with some straw in the bottom of the cart, and as straw was then taxed upon importation into Scotland, the authorities compelled him to pay the duty of one penny. He thereupon sued the Customs to recover the coin, on the grounds that the straw was not for sale, but was used as packing. The case occupied the attention of Edinburgh for two whole months, and then the court decided in favour of the plaintiff, and presented the Customs with a little bill for £150.

The Italian Customs were caught in the same way in 1895. The officers at Rome stopped a man who was carrying a box of confectionery from the docks, and demanded one centime (the third part of a farthing) as sugar duty. The man declared that the box did not contain a pound of sugar, but he paid the centime and then sued the Customs. He won the case, but his opponents appealed against the verdict, and again lost the day. In the end they were compelled to return the centime and pay 3,000 liras (£160) in legal fees, which worked out at 300,000 times the value of the coin for which they had quarrelled.

One of the most expensive cases brought about by a trifle, was that instituted by Mr. Henry Watson, the famous racehorse owner, against one of the northern railways for breaking his bag while he was travelling to Edinburgh some years ago. The bag cost fourteen pence to mend, and he at once sued the company for that amount, but, after almost endless litigation, he lost the day, and had to pay £3,700 in legal expenses.

HUNT IDEAS AND CATCH SOVEREIGNS.

IF you are walking in the street in town or country and observe something curious, however insignificant it may seem to you, make a mental note of it. If it is something you cannot understand, so much the better. When you get home jot down your idea on a piece of paper, together with your name and address, and send it to the Editor in an envelope marked "IDEA."

If the idea which you send is considered of sufficient interest to justify our making inquiries and publishing an article on the subject, you will be paid for the article at the rate of

TWO GUINEAS A COLUMN.

If the same idea be sent in by several readers, the money will be paid to the person whose suggestion first reaches us. If a reader forwards a subject for an article we have already by us naturally he cannot expect payment.

P. G. G.—Pearson's Gossipy Guides, on sale at all booksellers and railway bookstalls, 1s. each.

"AS A MAN SOWS."

POWERFUL SERIAL.

Beware the woman with ruddy hair,
For her hate is red, and she weaveth a snare
That spelleth woe to Malyon's heir.

Extract from a document in the possession of the Malyon family.

By the author of "Fettered Lives."

CHAPTER XLVI.

Lady Malyon's Midnight Expedition.

The night was dark. A horrible look swept across the beautiful face, distorting it—the expression Gilbert Malyon had seen on the features of the woman of La Maison Rouge. It was too early yet. She let fall the curtain; then locked the door. Her hair gleaming like flames, her silken night-robe shimmering, she swept to and fro the room, beautiful, horrible, with a restless, stealthy tread, like some caged, hungry tigress that knows her meal-time is drawing near. Then, ceasing her pacings, she clasped her hands convulsively above her head.

"The little robber," she whispered, "the little robber!"

A few minutes later all the whiteness, the radiance, and the red-gold had vanished. She stood hooded and heavily cloaked, her features thickly veiled—a grim, black figure, almost inquisitorial.

She viewed her image in a great glass; then raised her veil. It was still too early. The flames had gone from her cheeks now; the full lips were white and twitching a little; but the opalescent eyes seemed more bright, desperately bright. She glanced at the clock. The hands were standing still. She crept up to it, listened. No. It was ticking. But this waiting was straining her nerves!

She approached her dressing table, littered with wonderful glass and gold-stoppered bottles, the rings that she had taken from her fingers, the jewels from her throat, and, having unlocked a drawer, took from it a tiny revolver, tiny as a toy. She thrust it away in a pocket. Again she glanced at the clock. It was nerve-straining work, this trying to kill time. A stray wisp of red-gold hair had fallen down across her eyes. She sprang to the mirror, and tucked it out of sight.

Footsteps sounded outside her door. Miles was making the final round of the Hall. She must wait yet a little longer. And waiting meant thinking! What if she failed? But she would not, *must* not fail! She drew a key from her pocket, and looked at it. It was a master key that Sir Royle had been wont to carry. It was the only one—so she believed, knowing nothing of a duplicate in the possession of Reuben Grimwood. She returned the key to the pocket set deep within her cloak, and rattled something—a box of matches.

Once again she glanced at the clock. She drew in a deep breath. The time had come!

She unlocked a drawer in a wardrobe. It was empty save for a commonplace, very cheap-looking tin can. A faint odour of paraffin came from the drawer. She took a scent bottle from her dressing table, and sprinkled the drawer. A subtle perfume of violets pervaded the room.

The tin can concealed beneath her cloak, she put out the lights, then noiselessly unlocked her door. Outside was darkness. She locked the door again behind her.

A few moments later a black, veiled figure emerged from the shadows cast by Malyon Hall, to vanish again into the shadows of great trees, to appear again, to vanish again. A shadow among shadows!

Tomb!

The clock, set in the grey church turret, sent forth a solitary fiery note into the darkness of the night.

Seth Scarfield, the little crippled cobbler, was silently stealing from his cottage to seek the grave of Nell Riordan and her babe, about to commune in spirit with the dead.

The black, veiled figure was nearing a small private gate set in the fence that ringed about Malyon Park. The lock of this, too, the master key fitted.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Halward Reaches Rushford.

Precisely at six o'clock Chickweed Joe shambled up to Bartholomew Boote's shop for the purpose of putting up the shutters. Boote, rather more quietly dressed than usual, was standing in the entrance, grasping with one hand a carpet bag.

"Now then, Joseph, sharp's the word."

Chickweed Joe slipped up the shutters quickly. Then Boote, having locked up, nodded airily to him, and started away down the lane.

"'Ere, I say, guv'nor, parding me, but you've forgotten somethin'!"

Boote turned rather sharply to see Chickweed Joe tapping the bowl of a stumpy pipe.

"Dear me, yes!"

Boote produced a handful of silver and coppers, selected two pennies, and handed them to Joe with the air of a man who was doing a handsome act, then turned on his heels again. Chickweed Joe kept his hand open and extended, and stared contemptuously at the coppers.

"Strikes me," he muttered, "that your generosity will be landin' yer in the workus one o' these days. And you was tryin' ter sneak off, makin' believe ter forget. Cer-rumbs!"

Then, as if suddenly remembering something, he started to whistle rather shrilly a sailor's hornpipe, his feet shuffling in time to the music.

A moment later Jack Halward swung round into the lane.

He had discarded his loafer's clothes for a quiet suit of blue serge and a respectable peaked cap. There was nothing about him to attract attention. He might have been a respectable seafaring man. The loafer's disguise was well suited to Pinchbeck Lane and its purlieus; but outside London it would have been conspicuous rather than otherwise. And Halward had a notion that he would be leaving London that evening. Bart Boote was still in view, in the act of entering a house further along.

"Good luck, Colonel!" whispered Chickweed Joe, as Halward passed him slowly, then went on his way, whistling and double-shuffling, till he had turned the corner. Then his manner changed.

"It's the Colonel's innin's this evenin'. Reckon I'll git round to the 'orspital and jest ask agen 'ow poor Meg's gittin' on"—his quaint face started to twitch—"when she was very bad it wasn't Chicky what she asked for—p'raps I never so much as crossed 'er mind. Fust and only pusson she asked fur was the Colonel. Rum! Can it be that—well, if it is so, I can't quite see 'ow it can 'ave come about. And it can't be on 'is side. 'E was engaged ter be married to this poor gal what we're lookin' fur. 'E ain't told me no more than that; but I ain't blind. I knows that 'e loves 'er still, and, accordin' to things, sho's a widder, and grantin' that we finds 'er—which I prays Gawd we does—wherefore not a second marriage? Not that the Colonel ever breathed a word of sich a thing, but wherefore not, secin' that she's a widder?"

Having left the keys of his shop with a neighbour, Boote walked as far as East Street, and there embarked in a cab.

When the cab drove away, another cab, some little distance behind, started after it.

"It is Rushford!" said Halward to himself as the cab ahead passed through the gates of Maiden Cross station.

When Boote passed on to one of the platforms, Halward was not far behind. He sat himself down in a quiet corner not far from the refreshment bar whither Boote had promptly adjourned.

It was past nine o'clock when Boote alighted at Rushford station. There was no vehicle outside. Humming a music-hall air in a falsetto voice, he made his way along the road. The stillness and the quiet of the country made more caution necessary; but Halward had been a hunter of big game in his wild days out West.

First Boote, then Halward, passed the solitary caravan drawn up by the roadside. Light was shining from the curtained windows. As Halward passed, a woman's voice, crooning out a song, reached him. It suggested a child being hushed to sleep. His attention was centred on the figure just visible ahead; but the ground that he was traversing recalled strange memories. Here it was that his own caravan had been pitched, that night when Gilbert Malyon had been done to death. Here also the Tucker's, where he had taken tea with them and Margaret Holt. What strange things had happened since then! He thought of the woman lying in the hospital.

Boote had left the road.

"Struck the bridle path that leads through to the back of the churchyard," thought Halward.

About what time Lady Malyon was passing from her husband's room to her boudoir, Reuben Grimwood was leaning on the stile at the back of the churchyard, fingering his lean visage thinking of her.

"Yours v. truly to command, B.B.!" whispered a voice behind him.

"Bartholomew, I'm glad you've not failed me"—it was a whisper also—"you passed a caravan by the roadside?"

"Yes."

"They are in that caravan!"

"St. Ananias, what?"

"In that caravan!"

It was the fortune of war. Halward had crept as close as he dared; but the two men he was spying upon had a position of vantage. He could hear them whispering; but not what they were whispering! He bent his body forward, straining every nerve to catch what was being said. In vain. Only sibilant, tantalising sounds! And Reuben Grimwood was telling how the knowledge of Grace Marsh and her child were in the caravan had been revealed to him.

"Tucker's, you say?" whispered Boote.

"Yes."

That night when Grimwood passed the village green he had been deep in thought.

"Friends of Margaret, the jade; but she won't be troubling us."

"I know!" said Grimwood.

"You know? Saw it in the paper?"

Then Grimwood whispered of what he had seen on the previous night after he had parted from Boote, whispered, too, of the remarkable resemblance of the loafer, who held Flash Meg in his arms, to Halward. Boote plucked a whisker uneasily. It was curious.

"Yet he seemed to be a known character in your neighbourhood. I heard his name—Hull!"

"I'll make inquiries about Hull when I get back," whispered Boote.

Only tantalising whispering sounds to the unseen listener! Yet a step nearer might be to betray himself.

"But nothing can be done to-night, Reube; but now we've got 'em, there must be no losing sight of them. The Malyon Arms won't be closed yet. I shall put up there for the night. I shall reconnoitre the van on my way, if the coast is clear."

"But something must be done soon!" whispered Grimwood desperately.

"And I must have time. I'm not endowed with the attributes of a divinity, brother! I wish to Heaven I were! If suspicions were aroused, inquiries would be set on foot, and all sorts of things might come out. And we don't want that, do we?"

More maddening, unintelligible whispering; then a gripping of hands, and a parting.

Boote returned the way that he had come, along the bridle-path. When he emerged into the road, he hesitated for a moment; then struck across towards a light shining on the other side.

"What's the game now?" thought Halward, on the edge of the bridle-path. It was a dark night; but the road was open, dangerous to cross. He crept along under the shadow of the low copse till he was on a level with the caravan.

"Great Scott!" he whispered sharply.

He could just distinguish a dark figure climbing up one of the wheels. Then something came between him and the light shining from a little side window of the caravan—Boote's head!

The light was unobscured again.

Halward's heart had ceased to beat. He recalled the crooning voice he had heard when he had passed the caravan—a voice suggestive of a mother hushing her child to sleep.

Was it possible? A spasm swept over his strong, plain face. Oh, God! Did it mean success at last?

Grace, Grace, Grace!

The old voice was ringing in his ears. For a moment, strong man that he was, his nerve seemed to have left him. His limbs started to tremble. But it was only momentary. He forced a steadiness upon himself.

Boote had reached the ground again. He moved away from the caravan into the road.

He was grinding his teeth, and blaspheming under his breath. He turned and shook a fist at the caravan; then started away towards the village.

What was the meaning of it all?

For a moment Halward hesitated, his strained mind divided between two courses.

But he had made up his mind before Boote had passed out of sight. As Boote had done, he crossed the road, and, having clambered up a wheel of the caravan, peered through the little window. A woman seated, her back turned to him, was rocking to and fro, singing to the baby in her arms. As he was still staring through, she rose up and turned.

With something like a sigh, Halward lowered himself to the ground. A moment after, keeping on the turf beside the road, he was moving along at a swinging pace in the direction taken by Boote. It was not long before a figure loomed out ahead indistinctly.

Boote entered the Malyon Arms, the one hostelry in the place. There was no train back to London that night. Halward was well-known at the inn. It would be impossible to pass himself off there under another name. It would be all over the village next morning that Mr. Halward was back in Rushford.

Halward swung round and walked back slowly along the road that he had come, a puzzled, thoughtful expression on his set features. He had heard Boote's muttered oaths, seen the shaking of his fist. What had Boote expected to see when he peered into the caravan? The glimpse that he himself had obtained had killed the hope that had suddenly sprung into existence, and yet—again he asked himself the question. And this summoning of Boote to Rushford? Hitherto it had been Grimwood who had visited Boote.

He came to a standstill and struck his head sharply. Hitherto he had believed that the whereabouts of Grace and her child were known to the confederates, but was it possible that they, as he was, were searching for them?

When Boote had peered into the caravan, had he expected to see Grace and her child? And from this might he not draw the conclusion that Grace was supposed to be living among caravan people? Then his thoughts suddenly flew off at a tangent. Had all that grim night-work on the river with Chickweed Joe been so much waste of time? Had Boote, as Chickweed Joe had suggested, more than one iron in the fire? But somehow he felt that he had moved a step forward that night. Boote's strange action, and the subsequent disappointment displayed, had furnished him with much food for reflection.

Had a glimmer of genuine light broken the darkness at last, or would it only prove to be a fatuous will-o'-the wisp?

He was level again with the caravan. The light had been extinguished. All was quiet. On the previous night he had not closed his eyes, before that there had been nights of watching on the river, but his brain was too busy to think of sleep, or where he would sleep. Striking the bridle-path a little further along, he returned to the stile at the back of the churchyard. He sat himself upon the stile, and mechanically filled his pipe. When the church clock struck midnight, he knocked out the ashes and pressed more tobacco into the hot bowl.

"When I see Margaret," he said half-aloud, "if she's well enough I must tell her everything!"

He drove the tobacco home tightly with a finger, then stared fixedly in front of him. Presently his chin began to sink down on to his chest. He jerked up his head with an effort, and it occurred to him that he had nowhere to sleep. Had it been earlier he would not have hesitated to have looked up his strange little friend, Seth Scarfield, the crippled cobbler. But at that hour it would be a shame to think of rousing the poor little chap.

"Queer, pathetic little character. Very secretive, and how he loathes them all at Malyon Hall. I can understand. But he and I hit it off very well together. I could trust him to hold his tongue. I'll look him up first thing in the morning. I don't feel like keeping my eyes open much longer. I'll curl up somewhere, I'm not so mighty particular. I can trust myself to wake with the dawn. Then I'll get round to Scarfield before there's anyone about"—a shadowy smile played across his haggard features—"I might do worse than curl up under that caravan."

Halward was as hard as the proverbial nails. Out West he had frequently been called upon to sleep in places compared to which a bed of turf beneath a caravan, with a wheel to prop one's back against, was almost luxury. "Roughing it" had always had a peculiar fascination for him. He yawned sleepily more than once as he made his way back along the bridle-path. Reaching the caravan, he deliberately took stock of it. It possessed only one entrance. At the back projected a wooden shelf, supported by chains, that carried one or two boxes, some trestles, a bulging sack, the nobbly protuberances of which betrayed cocoanuts, and some empty sacks. Halward helped himself to a couple of empty sacks and crept under the caravan. As he did so, he struck against something soft—a horse's nosebag. He unhitched it. It

Have you read "The Phantom Army," by Max Pemberton, price 6d.?

would serve well as a pillow. He looked like being more comfortable than he had anticipated.

A few moments later he was asleep, completely invisible as he lay in the deep shadow of the caravan.

Half-past twelve.

One o'clock.

The church-clock sent forth a drowsy, tombing note into the darkness of the night.

At that time a veiled figure was fitting a master-key into the small gate set in the fence that ringed about Malyon Park.

At that time Seth Scarfield was creeping from his cottage, his destination the churchyard. He locked the door behind him and thrust the key into his pocket. He did not go so far along the road as the bridle-path, but turned up the lane that led to the back of the church.

Yet had he left his home a few moments sooner he might have been able to distinguish a dark figure, more like a shadow than a human being, that flitted silently and swiftly across the lane, a little way beyond the stile, into the copse!

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Fire!

When the bridle-path emerged on to the turf beside the road, she paused for a moment to listen—the woman whose features were veiled, whose red-gold hair was hooded!

Not a sound broke the stillness of the night. On the other side of the road the caravan loomed out darkly. She flitted across the road. Once again she paused to listen, her dilated eyes blazing out like fiery stars; then she crept up the steps on to the platform of the caravan.

She drew something from under her cloak. There was a gleam of metal; then an odour of paraffin filled the air.

She crept down from the platform. There was a faint rasping sound; but the match had snapped without lighting. Her hands were shaking so that she could scarcely draw out a second match. But at last a flame flickered up.

The next moment, even as she leant forward, a slight sound, seeming to come from under the caravan, reached her ears. The match all but fell from her palsied hand. She stood for a moment paralysed, irresolute. No other sound! It must have been some rat or rabbit in the hedge behind the van. The match was burning down to her finger-tips.

She leant forward again; dropped the match.

A flame leapt up, lighting up the figure that was speeding across the road.

The sleeper beneath the caravan, who, a few seconds before, had turned over on to his side, opened his eyes.

Where was all the light coming from?

Good God! The caravan must be on fire!

Then a woman's shrill scream of terror rang out.

Halward was out from under the van, and on his feet. The front portion of the van, the door, the platform, were aflame. A fierce light was shining from the windows. The interior was also aflame.

And Halward knew a woman and a child to be within.

There was a crash of glass.

"Save my child!"

The small window, high up, had been broken. Halward had caught a glimpse of a baby's head; then——

The woman, overpowered by smoke, must have sunk back with the child in her arms.

It was a small window, barely big enough for a man to wriggle himself through. But Jack Halward meant to have a try. He sprang up on to one of the wheels, gripped the window-frame, and, with a mighty wrench, tore it completely away. Through the smoke he could see the woman lying on the floor, the child in her arms. He jammed his head and shoulders through; reached down; clutched the lodge of a berth below; dragged himself through and down on to it.

Smoke and flames and heat were almost unbearable!

But the flames had not yet reached the blankets on the berth. Halward snatched them up, and as he gathered the the woman and her baby in his arms, wrapped them about with them. They were both unconscious. There was no getting them out by the way he had entered. He was reeling now, scorched and well-nigh suffocated.

He lowered his head; reeled through smoke and flame to the caravan door; with a savage, desperate kick burst it open! Through more smoke and living flames! He leapt blindly from the burning platform, staggered on mechanically; then sank to the ground, his charred clothes crumbling from him, the blankets about the woman and child singed and black as cinders, but not burning.

The fierce light of the blazing caravan illumined a little, huddled-up heap of humanity!

And a woman, borne on the wings of fear, yet with a horrible inhuman exultancy in her heart, is speeding through the copse. A branch strikes her across the face, and tears away her veil, revealing the grey, distorted features of Lady Malyon. With a hiss she turns. A pale light is illumining the darkness in the distance. Her veil—she must have it! Ah, there it is! With a catching of her breath, she tears it from the branch, and speeds on again!

The light behind is growing stronger, more lurid!

Will it be seen at the Hall before she reaches it?

* * * * *

Seth Scarfield had made his way to the quiet corner of the churchyard where Nell Riordan and her child lay buried, and had sat himself down on a flat tombstone hard by the grave. His huge head was resting on his hands, a wistful look shone from his dark eyes. Of late he had had the churchyard to himself.

Was it summer lightning, that flash of pale light in the distance? But it did not vanish as lightning must have done. The little cripple clambered up on to the tombstone. No, it was fire. Yonder was Beech's farm.

"Fire!"

The word burst involuntarily from his lips as he shambled laboriously to the stile. The quickest way to the farm was along the bridle-path.

He had clambered over the stile, and was moving along the lane when what looked like a shadow flitted across the path into the growth beyond.

"Hi!" he cried.

There was no response. Not long ago a rick had been fired in the neighbourhood by an aggrieved labourer. The ferrety instinct in the little cripple had been awakened. He quickened.

"Hi!" he cried again, in a shrill, rasping voice.

No response. He had reached the spot where it had seemed to him that the shadow had disappeared—where a narrow pathway led through bushes and undergrowth to a gate set in the fence that inclosed the park. He turned into the path, moving with all the speed that his crippled limbs would allow of, right up to the gate, but no trace of a living soul!

"Hi!"

The speeding woman, clutching her veil in one hand, had crossed the lane when the first shrill, rasping cry had reached her. She had been seen! She bounded forward as if a spur had been driven into her flesh. In her left hand she clutched the master-key. She might yet do it!

She reached the gate; but it was dark, and the key-hole——

"Hi!"

It sounded nearer than the first cry. And then—the key fell from her nerveless hands.

Someone had fitted a key into the lock on the far side.

'Twixt the devil and the deep sea!

The gate opened. Behind her she could hear the sounds of heavy, dragging footsteps.

Power to reason had left her. She reeled blindly forward through the open gate. Dark though it was, the man about to pass through, saw and recognised the white features.

The gate swung to with a faint click. She stumbled, went down on her knees. The next moment her wrist was gripped, and a face peered into hers.

"You!"

It was Reuben Grimwood's voice.

She was in a half-fainting state.

"Oh, God!" she breathed up, "save me. They're on my track!"

The distant glare was visible above the fence. The laboured footsteps were coming closer.

Her nerve had gone.

"Save me—if you love me!"

Reuben Grimwood crushed a thin hand over her mouth.

"Keep quiet!" he hissed.

The sounds outside had ceased for a moment; the gate was rattled; then sounds again, but Grimwood's sharp ears told him that whoever it was outside was moving away. His hand was still pressed over the woman's mouth. Only when the sounds had died away did he relax his grip. He raised her up on to her feet. Her face was a livid colour. He put an arm about her—she was tottering so.

He had seen the distant glare, and something told him that she was irrevocably in his power now, if—but whose had been those laboured footsteps?

"Come!" he whispered; "we must get back!"

So indistinct had been the shadowy figure that Scarfield had seen, that it might have been either a man's or a woman's. When he had reached the gate he had come to the conclusion that the mysterious being must have branched off either to the right or the left. He had turned back. When he emerged from the bridle-path on to the road, he realised that the fire was in no wise connected with Beech's farm.

The caravan was one mass of flame. Men were hurrying up, and, some distance away, he could see a huddled-up heap lying on the turf by the road. He was the first to reach it. It resolved itself into a man and a woman and a tiny child.

The man's arms were clasped round the other two, as though he were still trying to shelter them. Then men hurried up and circled round. And there was much bending down and whispering; then a shouting out for hurdles.

And Seth Scarfield, hustled on to one side, heard it pass from lip to lip that the man and the woman were alive, but that the little child was dead!

And among those who crowded round was a man with a wizened face and side-whiskers of a suspiciously black colour.

The village fire-engine was the last to arrive on the scene. Some few remained to watch the efforts of the local brigade; but most trailed silently after two hurdles that were carried away to Beech's farm.

Some whispered that the caravan belonged to the people who owned the shooting gallery, but others denied this. They had seen the shooting gallery and the caravan pass out of the village earlier in the evening.

"You'll find," whispered one man, "that a lamp and one of those durned Yankee low-flash oils was the cause of the fire!"

CHAPTER XLIX.

The Master Key.

"They say the fire must have been caused by a lamp exploding, but it's difficult to get at the rights of the story. The caravan belonged to those people who have the shooting-gallery on the green. The poor little child—well, he's past help! But they say the man and the woman—they were taken to Beech's Farm—are going on as well as could be expected. But I daresay we shall be hearing more presently. My information comes from the postman. Anyway, it's a sad business. I know her ladyship will be upset, very upset. I believe Mrs. Arbuthnot to have interested her in the poor woman and her child. Pettiss will tell you how her ladyship visited that very caravan, and I know that two bottles of port, besides grapes, went with her. The poor young woman had been ailing."

Miles, the butler, the centre of a group of servants in the servants' hall, shook his head sadly.

"Tucker was the name of the people, wasn't it?" questioned a footman.

"Yes, I believe it was."

Then a bell rang out.

"Nannette," said Miles, "there goes her ladyship's bell. She's later than usual, this morning."

Then another bell rang out.

"And there goes Lord Reuben Grimwood!" said the footman sarcastically, "I wonder how many times he's going to have the carriage out to-day?"

When Nannette entered her ladyship's bedroom, blinds and curtains were still drawn. A bottle containing Trional tabloids stood on the table beside the bed.

"Your ladyship slept well, I hope?" murmured the maid, approaching the bed.

"Yes, Nannette, and no. I have slept without waking once, but I feel tired. And I have a headache. Go and send one of the nurses to me at once. Then come back and dress me. Only draw the blinds of the far window. My head aches!"

When the maid had gone Lady Malyon pressed her hand to her burning forehead. She had longed to question! She sat up in her bed, memories of the night throbbing through her brain. She knew herself to be at the mercy now—absolutely—of the man she had never ceased to despise, but it was not thought of him that made her shiver. Someone must have seen her, someone had called out after her—who? Yet what could have been proved against her?

A uniformed nurse entered the room.

"Quick, tell me, how is Sir Royle?"

"He passed a fairly good night, your ladyship."

"Say that I shall be with him soon!"

When Nannette returned, her ladyship was seated in an easy-chair in the darker part of the room.

"Brush my hair, Nannette."

It was while skilfully plying the brushes that Nannette told her ladyship of the fire.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Lady Malyon, "but the little child?"

"Dead! They say it must have been a lamp, your ladyship!"

"Oh, but this is shocking. And the poor woman?"

"She and the man——"

"Man?"

The word, spoken surprisedly, had slipped out before she could check herself. Mrs. Brownlow had told her that Tucker slept in the shooting gallery.

"Yes, your ladyship, they were both dreadfully burnt, but they say that they are going on as well as can possibly be expected."

"And it was a lamp, they think?"

"Yes, your ladyship!"

Lady Malyon crushed under a sigh of relief. When her maid had dressed her, she glanced at herself in a mirror. Her face was white, her eyes dark-rimmed. There was a slight red mark across her forehead.

"You can go, Nannette."

A little rouge upon her cheeks, a little powder skilfully applied to the mark on her forehead, then she sought her husband's room.

So it was thought to be a lamp accident! And there was no little robber now to steal away her rights and her child's birthright! And who could prove anything? Only one man, and he, if he was her master now, was still also her slave as well!

In the darkness that someone could not have seen her features, might not have been able to distinguish whether it was man or woman!

She passed into the sick room, bent down over the bed, and kissed her husband. The room was dimly lighted.

"Clare," whispered the old man, "are you better to-day?"

"Yes, Royle! You're always thinking of others!"

"Have you seen our little fellow yet?"

"No, Royle, I came to you first!"

"Splendid little lad. I want to see him presently, if it's only for a few moments!"

"Yes, my husband!"

There was a silence of some moments. It was broken by Sir Royle.

"Clare," he said, "Nurse Norton was asking me if she might have the key to the gate that opens out into the lane at the back of the church. It would save her time when she goes down to early service. Would you give it her?"

Lady Malyon's jewelled hands shut up convulsively. She had suddenly remembered something!

(To be continued.)

Fiction readers will be interested to hear that we have now made arrangements for the publication of a new story which will start in the course of a few weeks. It is written by an author who has been busily engaged upon it for many months past, under circumstances which are peculiarly interesting, and about which we shall probably tell you a little later on.

GRANDFATHER: "What! You fallen in love with Signora Fontalba, the actress at the Pantheon Theatre?"

Grandson (excitedly): "Yes, Grandpa, and if you have anything to say against the young lady you had better wait till I am out of the room."

Grandfather: "I say a word against her? Why, my dear fellow, I was over head and ears in love with her myself when I was your age!"

WHEN the ass in the lion's skin essayed to roar he merely brayed.

But the ass was resourceful.

"I have brain-fag!" he protested.

And thereupon there were very many who believed him a lion after all.

This fable teaches that one should not feel it necessary to shun good society just because one happens to be an idiot.

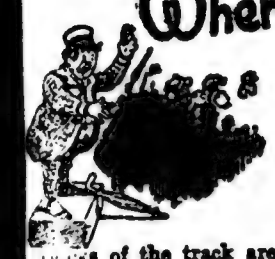
A BRICKLAYER was one day brought to the hospital severely injured by a fall from a house-top. The medical officer in attendance asked the sufferer at what time the accident occurred.

"One o'clock," was the reply.

On being asked why he came to fix the hour so accurately, he answered:

"Because I saw the people at dinner through a window as I was coming down."

All lovers of an exciting book should get "The Final War," by Louis Tracey, price 6d.



TRICKS of the track are mu
amateur sports than the unsop
to believe.

The cry of "hard lines!" is
matter of fact, it has only bee
ing," accompanied by a bit of

As a rule the officials of the
dealing with these matters ar
betting fraternity are keener
necessity is the mother of inven
schemes are unscrupulous, the

At some meetings the official
ing the bookies out, and whe
fair and square; but once the
fiasco obtain a footing the
what is dubious.

Only a few weeks ago the
petitions at a North Midland
they were robbed of their pla
by being held by those wh
machines.

The committee watched th
could see nothing wrong, tho

the complaints w

When inquiries came to be
certain of the starters had bee
by a bookmaker, and that a
literally given the race. He h
cap and a bigger notion of hi
the betting gang had netted clo
the day.

The suspected ones were wa
were allowed to appoint thei
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When it Pays to Lose

Swindles at Amateur Sports.

Tricks of the track are much more in evidence at amateur sports than the unsophisticated visitor is wont to believe.

The cry of "hard lines!" is often set up, when, as a matter of fact, it has only been a case of skilful "roping," accompanied by a bit of fairly-done acting.

As a rule the officials of the unions and associations dealing with these matters are keenly alert; but the betting fraternity are keener still. With the latter, necessity is the mother of invention, and if some of their schemes are unscrupulous, they are also ingenious.

At some meetings the officials are successful in keeping the bookies out, and where this is the case all is fair and square; but once the bookmaker and his confederates obtain a footing there is bound to be much that is dubious.

Only a few weeks ago the riders in the cycle competitions at a North Midland meeting complained that they were robbed of their places at the starting point, by being held by those who were to push off the machines.

The committee watched the subsequent heats but could see nothing wrong, though

the complaints were renewed.

When inquiries came to be made, it was found that certain of the starters had been "got at" on the quiet by a bookmaker, and that a rank outsider had been literally given the race. He had gone away with a big lead and a bigger notion of his improved prowess; but the betting gang had netted close on a level thousand on the day.

The suspected ones were warned, but when the riders were allowed to appoint their own men matters were not greatly improved; for, as often as not, most of them were in the swim, and would quietly admit that it often "paid them better to run to order than to bag the best pot offered."

Unfortunately the tricks of the track neither begin nor end with this sort of thing. A gang worked a big cycle race in Lancashire by entering quite a number of men who had to watch those who were not amenable to bribery, and prevent them "doing damage."

This was accomplished by deliberately "nursing" the dangerous men, and smothering their spurts to get to the front. One man who risked an accident to break through had the mortification of being reported, and another had a bad spill and had his machine damaged.

It was afterwards admitted that each man in the "nursing combine" received £2 10s., although none of them had the ghost of

a chance for a prize

The man who had been allotted the task of winning received £10 to do the "faking"—that is, appearing in the heats to only just get home, and in the final holding back as a dead-beat until all "the money was on," and then sprinting to the first place.

It cost the bookmaker £40 to "work" the race, apart from his outlay in the preliminary "quiet talks," but, although the meeting was not a big one, he cleared £250.

In many of the cycle races the bookmaker works by a reversal of the process thus described; but, although it may not appear so at first sight, it is more risky to those involved.

He enters a man who does fast times in the preliminaries and then, when made favourite by the public, fails just on the post, or meets with a puncture or spill.

When he is beaten on the post it is generally by some other man—usually a clever rider who spurts well—who makes one of those "efforts" described in the local papers as "marvellous."

By this means the bookmakers win both ways. They have backed the winner and

taken heavily on the loser.

But it means added cost. The principals have to be heavily squared, £20, £30, or £50 each in accordance with the event.

It is difficult to work this method because of the alert oversight now maintained, which means that the cyclist who is discovered will be suspended for a period which makes further appearance on the track a matter of doubt; and especially because the bookmakers have to make sure of their men.

Sometimes they fail in this, and are themselves reported; whilst on other occasions they catch a Tartar in some smart amateur who wins despite all they can do, and whose obvious form turns the betting out of its anticipated course.

It is when an "independent" of this kind "upsets the show" that he is in danger, and sometimes meets with it, though there are cases the other way about.

Only last season a rising young rider, having refused an offer not to try, was quietly warned that he "might meet with an accident if he 'pushed' for the prize." He was told by a friend that a man had been told off to spill him.

He happened to be one of those fellows whose grit shows itself in emergency, and made up his mind to be equal with the "wrecker" and, if possible snatch a win.

It did not take him long to spot his man and make up his mind what to do. He simulated fag and hung back, afterwards dragging up as though under a great effort. Then he hung alongside as though incapable of a spurt until they came to the last bend, for which he quietly worked to the highest point. Reaching this he came with a big rush and, though his foe tried to shut him in, he slipped past him.

He had now worked himself into a good position with the wrecker next to him in hot pursuit, and the "man who had to win" on the heels of the wrecker. Keeping up a good pace he worked to the inside position so that he could only be passed by a detour.

Then he spurted as though he meant to make the pace a cracker. His pursuer spurted too; but his effort was fatal to his object, for our friend slowed down as suddenly as he had spurted, and before anybody could say "Jack Robinson!" his enemy's front wheel had touched his hind wheel, with the result that it took the pursuer all his time to save himself. In doing so he had to swerve so completely that he blocked the man marked for victory, and left the one who was to be spilt with a start which

gave him first place.

He was threatened with a protest in the dressing-room, and was sought to be blackmailed; but he showed how much he knew and was left to the fruits of his grit.

In the pedestrian races run on unmarked courses "spiking" often takes the place of spilling, whilst a poke in the ribs as a man is trying to "get through the ruck" just after the start is often sufficient to mean all the difference between victory and defeat.

Here "roping" is the principal resource of the betting man, and he is willing to pay well for the finished article, because he knows the crowd will more freely lay odds on good amateur events than on professional contests at which, rightly or wrongly, many of those who dabble in this class of betting look askance.

There are men on the track who have reduced the art of just failing to win to a science, and only those who know they have not to win have the least idea that they have not put every ounce of stamina and skill into all they have done.

So well do these men do the trick that they have been cheered for nearly winning an apparently hopeless race; but when a man gets three times as much for losing as for winning, and a semi-retaining fee into the bargain, he

can afford to be artistic.

And it pays the bookmaker, too. There is the case of a clique clearing a Yorkshire ground of close on £2,000 in one Saturday afternoon.

Of course, they have to take their risks. A case occupied the attention of a County Court judge the other day in which a winner had "sold" the bookmaker in favour of a syndicate worked up by himself; but, as a rule, there is honour among—well, doubtful amateurs.

A much rarer form of trickery is to get at runners' shoes and tamper with the spikes; and a still rarer one to get groundsmen to interfere with pitches near the finish by a little doctoring of the turf, which will throw a given runner off his stride at the finish; and rarer still is the doctoring of a favourite through his food or drink.

But all are tried in proportion as they are likely to succeed, and the only way of crushing the system is to make betting impossible by due notification, and by the ruthless eviction from the ground of every man who breaks the rule.

"Young man," said a stern parent to his daughter's sweetheart, "do you intend to stay here all night, holding my daughter's hand and looking into her eyes like a sick calf?"

"No, sir."

"What do you intend to do, then?"

"Well, I had thought that when you did us the kindness to retire, I would put my arm round her waist, and, if she did not object too forcibly, I might risk a kiss."

Two ladies had an amusing experience in making a formal call at a house in Brighton recently. The maid asked them to wait until she ascertained whether the persons inquired for were in. Presently she tripped downstairs and announced that "the ladies were not at home." One of the callers, finding that she had forgotten her cards, said to her friend:

"Let me write my name on your card."

"Oh, it isn't at all necessary, miss," put in the maid, cheerfully, "I told them who it was!"

HAVE YOU CORONITIS?

THE LATEST FASHIONABLE MALADIES.

Are you feeling generally out of sorts? When you awake in the morning is your mouth hot, your appetite bad, your nerves rather weak? Do you feel great lassitude, with little interest in your usual pursuits? If so, you have an attack of coronitis. This disease is due to the fact that so much disappointment was caused when the Coronation was postponed.

Physiologically, the sympathetic system is out of gear. That system, consisting of large masses of nervous substance (ganglia) connected by nerves, which supplies all involuntary movement to the body; and different from the nervous system (cerebro-spinal) which, through the brain and spinal cord, and the myriads of nerves reaching every part of the body, gives voluntary movement to the muscles and supplies the organs of the five senses. Patients with coronitis should seek bright surroundings and take plenty of exercise in the open air.

A disease very fashionable just now in New York is volcanitis. It is directly due to the eruptions in the West Indies. The atmosphere is charged with fine dust, the sulphurous particles of which being inhaled by the lungs affect the blood. The symptoms are extreme lassitude, constant drowsiness, and indisposition to do work of any sort. New York physicians are reaping golden harvests, though, at present, the only remedy is immediate change of air—to the country or seaside.

Persons who are fond of Dutch cheese should be careful of procuring only the best quality, for a new and painful disease has lately been discovered connected with it. It rejoices in the deadly name of tyrotoxismus. From such widely-separated districts as Bethnal Green and Bermondsey and Finsbury, cases have been brought to the London hospitals all suffering from this form of ptomaine poisoning.

A Finsbury physician, Dr. Newman, made a daring experiment by swallowing a portion of the cheese with which many of his patients had been poisoned. He suffered great pain, but his investigations revealed the presence of a hitherto unknown disease. The same cheese also killed a rat and mouse experimented upon at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Therefore, beware of cheap Dutch cheese, and so avoid tyrotoxismus.

New York is too go-ahead to have such old-fashioned epidemics as "flu," or small-pox. But as epidemics were lately the fashion in various parts of the world, it brought out one of its own. Kankakee—otherwise laughing sickness—is the name given to the new disease.

As soon as the germs of kankakee become assimilated into the system of the patient, he will exhibit a tendency to give way to uncontrollable laughter on the slightest pretext. Accordingly as the malady is weak or strong, the patient will keep laughing continuously for from five minutes to five hours. Melancholy individuals, with funereal physiognomy, were much in demand as lecturers during the run of the disease, for this was the only cure—with the exception of heavy doctors' bills—which New York physicians could suggest.

Kleptomania is an old and constantly recurring disease here, but over in America it has another name. In fact, it has several names, such as souvenitis and relicenza. When President McKinley was shot, the first man to grapple with the assassin was "Big Jim Parker," a negro. The hero, who was then employed at the Buffalo Exhibition as a waiter, was immediately the subject of attention from persons suffering from relicenza. They wanted relics of "Big Jim" as mementoes of the sad occasion.

Some were paltry enough to snip pieces from his clothing unknown to him, or to filch souvenirs from his pockets. Seeing what a high value was set upon himself, the negro cut up his clothing piecemeal and sold it by auction. The buttons of his coat realised $20 (£4) each.

The fever developed itself again last March during the visit to America of Prince Henry of Prussia. Rupert Fritz is one of the most noted chefs of New York, and he obtained the contract for the luncheon to be served at Shooter's Island after the launching of the Kaiser's yacht *Meteor*. As 2,000 guests were to dine, the caterer was compelled to borrow a great quantity of plate, among which was some very valuable silver.

The epidemic was very strong that day, for nearly everything was purloined, especially the silver. Fritz, being unable to make good the loss, was ruined, and is now a bankrupt. At the launching of the *Meteor* 200 flags were hoisted, the next day fourteen only remained. The *Hohenzollern*, Prince Henry's steam yacht, had to be protected by the sailors, and a large force of private detectives, from the sufferers of souvenitis, mostly ladies.

Some were even stopped with pictures unblushingly taken from the walls. Parts of the ship were also missing, and at last the sailors received orders to satisfy the craving with bits of woodwork, old hat bands, and other trifles, procured from anywhere, and sold at ridiculous prices.

Stories humorous, stories pathetic, stories of love, stories of adventure—in fact, stories of all sorts, will be found in SHORT STORIES.

COMPLETE IN THREE PARTS.

For Another's Sake.

FIRST PART.

The Promise is Given.

"I'm done for, Mab!"

"Done for? Bob, what do you mean? Tell me quickly what is the matter?" and the girl who spoke rose from her chair by the window and hurried across to the side of the young man who had just entered the room.

"What is it, dear?" she repeated, looking into his face with eyes full of a great tenderness, and a great fear.

The face upon which her eyes rested was deadly white, and as drawn and haggard as though the young man had passed through some terrible illness. Dark shadows were pencilled under his eyes and carved about his mouth; unutterable misery was written all over his countenance, and expressed itself in every line of his shrinking form.

The anguish in the girl's eyes deepened as she laid her hand on his arm, and once more asked him:

"What is it, Bob? Tell me, dear old boy. I can't bear to see you looking like this."

With a groan that was half a sob, he flung away her hand and sank into a chair.

"You'd better not touch me, Mab!" he cried. "I've done for myself this time, and to-morrow old Graves is safe to give me the sack—and worse!"

Mab looked at her brother in speechless dismay for a moment, then said slowly:

"Mr. Graves will give you the sack? Oh, Bob! Why?"

"Because I've robbed him; that's why," the young man burst out sullenly. "It's no use going into heroics or hysterics, Mab. I've done the thing, and I'm jolly sorry—but—it can't be undone."

Mab knelt down by the chair in which her brother almost cowered, and took his hand in both hers.

"Try and tell me just what has happened," she said very gently, though her heart beat fast with a grief she could scarcely contain.

Her Bob—her twin brother, the idol of her heart—a thief! Oh! it was impossible, *impossible!* He must be exaggerating, whatever had happened.

"I'd better make a clean breast of it," he exclaimed desperately, pulling himself upright, but not letting his miserable eyes meet hers; "you know old Graves gave me promotion three months ago, thanks to your calling on him for me?"

"Yes," the girl answered as he paused, and a shudder ran through her when she recalled that interview with her brother's wealthy employer, an interview from which she had come away filled with sick loathing and disgust.

"Well," her brother went on, too selfishly absorbed to notice his sister's shiver of recollection, "I got a raised salary, and I had more responsible work. A lot of the cash of the office passed through my hands, and I was accountable to no one for it until the half-yearly auditing. And I—well, Mab, men will be men"—he spoke in an apologetic, sheepish fashion—"and I—I'm not better than the rest. You mustn't blame me too much, old girl, but I got with a lot of fellows who gambled and betted—and I suppose I'm a weak sort of chap. I got led away."

He glanced nervously at his sister, but her face was bent down; he could not see the quick flash of scorn in her eyes, the scorn that cannot but be felt by a strong nature for a weak one which blames everybody and everything except itself.

"I've lost money," he went on, "and—oh, Mab!—I was pressed for it, awfully hard pressed. I didn't know where to turn—and I—well, I borrowed the money from the office. Of course, I always meant to pay it back. I meant to pay it long ago but luck has been against me! Things have gone from bad to worse, and now—the audit is to-morrow and they'll find a deficit of over £500."

In the silence that followed his words you could have heard a pin drop, then Mab rose slowly to her feet.

"I can't believe it," she cried brokenly; "I can't believe that you can have done such a thing, Bob! Bob, dear, tell me it is just a hideous nightmare, tell me that our mother's son is not a thief."

"You needn't proclaim it on the housetops," he muttered, "and I tell you I meant to pay it back. It was only a loan."

"*Only a loan,*" she cried passionately. "Bob, don't try to persuade yourself of anything but the truth. It was a theft, and I—oh, God! if I could only raise the money before to-morrow! If I could only pay it back and save our name, our dear dead father's and mother's name from disgrace. But what can I do? What can I do?"

Wringing her hands together she moved away towards the window and looked down into the dreary street, as though seeking for inspiration from the grey houses opposite, or the bustling passers by.

Backwards and forwards through her busy brain there flashed scheme after scheme, each one more impossible and impracticable than the last.

Five hundred pounds! Why Bob might as well want £500,000 for all she could do to get it for him!

She dropped her head upon her hands at last, with a pitiful little moan.

She had been so happy over Bob's promotion in Mr. Graves' office, bought at the cost of her awful interview with the hateful millionaire. More prosperous days had seemed to be opening before the brother and sister, who, since the death of their parents, had found life a hard struggle.

Mab herself earned £2 a week, and Bob's step up in the office had made the girl feel that they were on the verge of actual luxury, and now—now had come this terrible blow. Her stifled moan attracted her brother's notice.

"I suppose Miles wouldn't help us?" he said doubtfully.

Mab's head was lifted instantly, the colour flamed over her face.

"Miles is working hard himself," she exclaimed warmly; "where do you think he would get £500? Oh, Bob!—you have broken my heart to-day."

Selfish and easy-going as Bob Denison was, he had a deep affection for the sister who had idolised him from his babyhood, and he rose quickly and put his arm round her.

"Forgive me, sis, dear," he whispered; "I know I'm a brute and a beast. I—Mab, darling, kiss me once and say you forgive me; then I shall go out of your sight and never trouble you again!" His voice broke, and in a second all Mab's resentment vanished, she drew his head down upon her shoulder, and kissed and fondled him in loving, motherly fashion, all her tenderness roused afresh for the brother who had ever been her first care.

Her tears fell softly on his curly hair, and she clung to him passionately, imploring him not to leave her, not to despair, but to let her try to think of some way out of the difficulty.

"There's only one way you can help me," her brother said suddenly, when they had both grown calmer; "old Graves thinks no end of you. If you were to go and—and ask him to give me another chance and all that—I believe he'd do it."

Mab recoiled a step.

"I can't do that, Bob! I can't—I can't! When I went for you before—he—insulted me," and she drew a long, gasping breath at the remembrance.

"Oh! stuff and nonsense. He told you you were a jolly pretty girl, and so you are. You're too sensitive, Mab. Old Graves isn't a bad sort, even if—if ——" He broke off, unable to find suitable words to describe his employer.

"He is a beast," the girl cried, "and I could not stoop to ask him another favour, even for you, Bob."

A greyer look of fear crept over her brother's haggard face.

"It is the only chance," he said, "the only one. It came into my head like an inspiration. If you can't help me, dear, he will prosecute for certain. He's a hard man over money—and I—I shall get, Heaven knows how long a sentence! Help me, Mab, darling, for our mother's sake, help me now!"

His agonised appeal struck on his sister's heart like a blow. How could she refuse him what he asked? How could she let her darling be punished, imprisoned, disgraced, when, perhaps, a word from her might save him. Intolerably as she shrank from what he asked her to do, she braced herself then and there to do it. With eyes full of an anguish he could not even dimly understand; and, with a face as white as one of the roses she wore in her belt, she stooped and kissed him.

"I will do it, Bob," she said bravely, "for our dear mother's sake—and for yours."

* * * * *

Mr. Graves, the wealthy city merchant, was seated in his inner office alone, absorbed in one of his multifarious schemes for making money, when a clerk entered, and said respectfully that a young lady wished to see him.

"Show her in—if she comes on business," the chief said shortly, and then buried himself in his papers until the door was again opened, and a rustle of skirts made him look up.

What he saw brought him quickly to his feet.

"Miss Denison!" he exclaimed, "this is indeed an unexpected honour and pleasure. What can I do for you?"

Though she shrank a little away from him, he took her hand in his, and held it in a close, warm clasp, looking down at her as she spoke with eyes full of unhidden admiration, and the sort of hungry expression with which a wolf regards a lamb.

That look made Mab shrink a little further from him, but he still retained her hand, and drew her towards a chair, placed near his own.

She sat down silently, dragging her hand from his, and trying to look up into his face with a cold, unconcerned glance.

But she could not meet the bold admiration in his black eyes, and, with a little shiver, she removed her own and looked down into her lap.

"Now, what can I do for you?" he asked, in a low caressing voice that made her shudder; "you know I tried to make you understand three months ago when you came to me, how gladly I would do *anything* to please you," and his eye travelled over her slight, graceful form, and lingered on her lovely downcast face with again that hungry look that reminded her of a wolf.

Indeed, he was not unlike that animal altogether, as Mab had often reflected. His piercing dark eyes and hair, his thin lips, and the large prominent teeth that flashed so whitely when he smiled, always reminded the girl of some wild animal.

"I do not wish to ask for anything for myself," she said coldly, in answer to his question; "please do not refer to our last unpleasant interview. I ——"

Then all at once she remembered that it was not for *her*, the sister of a self-confessed thief, to take a high and mighty line with the thief's victim; on the contrary, she ought to be humble, pleading, diffident.

Clasping her hands tightly together, she lifted her beautiful eyes to the evil, smiling face above her, and ended her sentence with the broken words:

"Oh! Mr Graves, I have come to plead with you for my brother!"

A hard, malignant glance shot out of the dark eyes watching her, to be replaced by one of strange triumph.

"For your brother?" he said softly; "why, Miss Denison, surely he doesn't want another rise?"

"No—no—it is not that. It is worse—much worse. He has done wrong, he has injured you. He"—her voice dropped to a whisper—"he has robbed you!"

"Robbed me?" The triumph did not die out of his eyes, though there was distinct surprise in his voice, and on his face, whilst Mab, in broken accents, told Mr. Graves of her brother's temptation and fall.

When her voice ceased there was silence in the office, a silence so profound that she could even hear the ticking of the gold repeater in the millionaire's pocket as he sat drawing patterns on the blotting paper with his pen.

"This is a very serious matter, Miss Denison," he said at last, "and I—I hardly know how I can overlook such a thing, even for you."

He spoke very slowly and gravely, and Mab could not see the smile that was creeping into his eyes, nor the increased look of triumph that lay in their depths.

"You will not overlook it?" she exclaimed, rising from her chair, and laying a hand on his arm in her pitiful anxiety, "you will not forgive him—this once—only this once? Mr. Graves, hear me—I beseech you hear me, for the sake of the brother I love. Forgive him, and, oh! surely you will have your reward!"

The smile flashed into the man's eyes again, but they were quite grave when they looked up into the lovely anguished face of the girl.

"You are asking me to hush up a most serious crime," he said almost sternly. "Surely you must see it is an impossible request."

"Ah! not impossible!" she cried; "not impossible!" and her hand gripped his arm. "Forgive Bob; be good to him this once. I have never asked a favour of anyone but you, and I have never asked it *for* anyone but Bob! Grant me this and I ——"

"And you—what?"

He looked at her narrowly, the smile in his eyes once more.

"I will forget that I was ever angry with you," she faltered. "I will look upon you as one of my best friends. Oh! don't you know that I would do anything to save Bob."

"Anything?" he exclaimed, springing to his feet also, and grasping both her hands, "would you do anything?"

"All that was possible," she faltered, startled by the mingled look of passion and triumph that flashed over her face, "you would not ask ——"

"I ask you one thing, only one," he said, "promise to be my wife, and your brother shall go scot free!"

"Your *wife?*" She tore herself from him and backed against the wall, looking at him with horror. "Your wife—*never!*"

Mr. Graves tightened his lips into a venomous line, his eyes gleamed viciously.

"Very well," he said, between his teeth, "then the law will take its course. You offered to do anything for your brother's sake, but ——" He shrugged his shoulders significantly.

"But not marry you—not marry *you!*" she cried, panting like some caged animal. "How could I? Ah, how could I?—I—you know—I hate you."

"You speak plainly," and he laughed harshly. "I never thought you loved me, my pretty Mab. Your reception of my friendly overtures when you last called on me left me no doubts on that score. But still I want you for my wife."

"Why?" she moaned, "why should you dream of such a thing?"

"Why?" he answered, striding to her side and hissing the words into her ear, "because you are the loveliest woman I know, and I love you—I tell you I love you, and I would win you at any price!"

He stooped towards her as though to draw her to him, but she pushed him back with her soft, white hands, saying piteously:

"Oh! but not at this price surely, surely not at this price. You could not be so wicked, so cruel. Give me the boon I ask you; give me my brother's safety for the love of Heaven, out of the kindness of your heart."

He gripped her by the wrists, and spoke slowly and with biting sarcasm:

"Understand once for all," he said, "you can gain safety for your brother on one condition, and on one only. I do not condone crimes for the sake of Heaven or goodness. I will forgive your brother only if you promise on your honour to become my wife in a fortnight from now. If you refuse, Bob shall suffer the full penalty of the law."

Mab's heart beat to suffocation, the room seemed as at once to go round before her eyes, the strong grip on her wrists was the only thing that prevented her from slipping to the ground, so deadly was the faintness that swept over her.

Marry this man, this reptile whom she hated? Oh, impossible—impossible even if—she were heart free, and as it was ——

And yet—Bob—her twin, her darling, committed to her care by their dying mother! Bob the apple of her eye, her dearest treasure in life save one—how could she be the one to sentence Bob to imprisonment, disgrace, ruin?

"Give me time to think, air to breathe," she gasped, rousing herself from the faintness that assailed her, and once more pushing the man from her with her little frail hands.

"Think as long as you like, only give me the answer I crave," he replied in caressing accents that filled her with sick loathing, and at the same moment drawing forward an armchair and placing it by the window which he flung open.

But Mab did not sit down. She leant against the window, letting the soft air of June blow upon her face, trying to think out the most terrible problem that had ever been presented to her in all her young life.

The SHORT STORIES cover designs are different every week. Each one is a work of art.

Mr. Graves seated himself again at the table, and watched her with eyes in which lay a badly veiled triumph; yet, as he drummed idly on the table, he found himself wondering uneasily whether she would yield to him after all.

From the first moment he had seen her, some months before, he had dreamt wild dreams of some day making her his own. Her exceeding loveliness, and its rare and unusual quality, combined to rouse in the man, who had hitherto been chiefly a money-maker, passions of the wildest kind. Her rebuff, when at their interview three months before he had paid her fulsome compliments, had for a time checked his ardour, but the sight of her now, awoke all his former feelings. Even her evident fear and dislike of him only added fuel to the flame.

Watching her now, he thought triumphantly what a beautiful addition such a wife would be to the great house in the country he had just built, and pictures of her arrayed in magnificent garments, and shining with the jewels he would give her, rioted through his brain. Yes, Mab Denison was certainly beautiful enough to drive a man mad with love of her.

Even now, in her simple black gown, and with that little white look of fear and misery on her face, no one could have seen her without being struck by her loveliness. The clear colouring of her skin was like the delicate tints of the softest pink and white roses; her eyes were blue as the sky above her, but her hair was black, and very soft and wavy, making in its ripples a beautiful dusky setting for her exquisite oval face.

Whilst Graves painted pictures in his mind of a future with Mab as his wife, the girl pressed her hands to her brow in a vain attempt to see the right path.

To marry a man she loathed was repulsive to her in every fibre of her being; to marry any but the man she loved was a thought too hideous and awful to be allowed for a moment in her heart. She moved quickly, and opened her mouth to answer Mr. Graves decisively, once and for all.

Then she paused, for Bob's face rose before her, Bob's haggard, miserable face and pleading eyes came between her and the sunny day without. Bob's anguished words shut out all other sounds from her ears.

"Help me, Mab, darling. For our mother's sake help me now!"

Ah, why had he said that? Why had he said *that?*

How could she refuse such a plea? And yet—how could she pay the price?

And now there swung before her mind another face, the face of Miles Anderson, the man who loved her, and to whom she had given her whole heart. His honest brown eyes seemed to be looking into hers, his voice clashed with Bob's in her brain; and he was telling her he loved her, and he was asking her ——

She shrank and shivered, remembering that it was only yesterday he had said to her, as he bade her farewell before going on a journey:

"Sweetheart, I would doubt the whole world before I doubted your truth!" Yet now she was meditating a step which would be the death blow to his love and trust.

She turned swiftly back to the table.

"I cannot do what you ask!" she exclaimed hurriedly; "I cannot be your wife. There—there is somebody else."

Graves looked into her face with a strange smile.

"Very well, Miss Denison," he answered, and each word cut like a knife; "you are very decided, so am I. Your brother will be handed over to the police at once—to-night!"

She started back as though he had struck her.

"To-night?" she cried.

"To-night! You yourself have told me of his crime, which we had not yet discovered! You will have the satisfaction of knowing that you with your own hands have given your brother into the clutches of the law. Possibly when he emerges from prison he will be a better and a wiser man. I hope I may congratulate you on your future happiness with the husband of your choice."

He rose and bowed, still with that strange smile on his face.

"Are you a fiend?" she cried, reeling where she stood; "can you torture a woman in cold blood, and then congratulate her?"

"I am sorry I cannot continue this interview," was the reply, and the dark eyes of the man watched the girl's working features pitilessly, "but—we are extremely busy here. I must bid you good day, but before you go you might be interested to hear me telephone to the police to arrest your brother."

He crossed the room to the telephone, but she flew to his side, and clung to his arm in a passion of despairing agony.

"Ah! wait—wait," she said. "Do not telephone—wait till I think, till I know. Wait!" She pressed her hands to her throbbing head, and only two words raced through her brain at lightning speed:

"Sacrifice yourself! Sacrifice yourself!"

"Wait!" she cried again, as his hand went out to ring the telephone bell; "it may kill me—I think it will—but—I cannot—let—Bob—suffer. I—will—be your wife—I—promise!"

As she uttered the last word a ghastly pallor overspread her face, she stretched out her hands wildly, then slipped to his feet like one dead.

[The second part of this story appears in the number of "Pearson's Weekly" ready next Friday.]

Little Brother (whose sister is playing cards with a gentleman): "Mr. Smiler, does Minnie play cards well?"

Mr. Smiler: "Yes, very well indeed."

Little Brother: "Then you had better look out; mamma said if she played her cards well she would catch you."

CAN'T MAKE MEN'S BOOTS.

And Some Other Things London Cannot Do.

Just fancy a city with a male population of over two and a half million not being able to make a pair of men's boots. But this is the case with London. Nearly every boot worn by the male population has been made outside her boundaries.

It is not that London does not care about making men's boots, or thinks she can do it cheaper by getting it done elsewhere, it is simply that she cannot. The best men's boots are made in Northampton and Norwich.

Middle-class boots are made in Kettering, Wellingborough, and Northamptonshire, generally. Even common, rough, hob-nailed boots have to be made far away from the Metropolis, being turned out principally in Bristol and its neighbourhood, and the other extreme, namely the Court shoe, worn on State occasions by the nobility, hies not from St. James', but from far-off Norwich.

The only boot-making done in London is in cheap female boots, and by a consummate effort, London can find enough labour in her East-end to turn out a fairly decent article. But the best women's boots she has to hand over to Norwich, who is much more accomplished in this direction.

London is a great town for cricket and tennis, but she cannot make the white canvas shoes necessary to these games. These require a certain delicacy and cleanliness that London cannot muster. If she tried to make a pair of white shoes, they would probably get dirty before completion, as shoe hands in the Metropolis do not make a great point of cleanliness. With black and brown canvas shoes she is able to grapple, and these are made in London. But, here again, the best are turned out in the provinces, notably Leicester.

Neither can she make children's strap shoes, which are made in Leeds and Norwich principally. Slippers are not made much in London, for the Rossendale Valley has the practical monopoly. There is a man there known as the Slipper King, and a very large percentage of slippers worn in London come from him. Patent leather boots, of course, are quite beyond London's capacity, and Northampton is the place for them.

Another equally useful article of clothing, and worn by millions is out of London's power to make. This is the straw hat. Nearly all the hats worn by Londoners in the summer come from Luton, St. Alban's, Dunstable, or Leighton Buzzard.

FOR THE CORPULENT ONLY.

A RATIONAL CURE FOR OBESITY.

Those fortunate persons who can afford to "take the waters" at some foreign spa, too frequently discover that the effects of the "cure" are but short-lived. This applies particularly to the corpulent. The reason is, that, although a temporary amelioration in health may be apparent, there is no permanent check on the tendency to form fat, so that the unwholesome accumulation of adipose matter on the internal organs is in no degree permanently abated. Now this tendency to the formation of fat is one of the greatest of dangers. It leads in many cases to what is known as fatty degeneration of the heart and liver, the consequences of which are often fatal. Why, then, do they not try some means of *permanently* eliminating the danger? Simply because they have in all probability not heard of the wonderful results of the "Russell" treatment, although it is safe to say that that treatment has proved to be the only radical means of ridding the system of superfluous fatty matter. If any of our stout readers who have any doubts on this matter will take the trouble to read a book called "Corpulency and the Cure," by Mr. F. C. Russell, we feel sure that those doubts will be very soon removed. The author, who is the originator of the treatment which bears his name, has devoted many years to the discovery of the causes of obesity, and of the best means of combating the complaint, and, to judge from the thousands of letters he has received from his patients, there cannot be any doubt that this system is admirably effective. Hundreds of extracts from these letters are reprinted in "Corpulency and the Cure," the originals of which are most carefully preserved for inspection.

The "Russell" treatment, in fact, is science's last pronouncement on the permanent eradication of adipose. It is, moreover, pleasant, easy, and quite harmless. There is no need for any distressing restrictions as to what to eat and drink, no need for exhausting exercises or debilitating purgative medicines. There is, indeed, nothing to cause any interference with one's everyday occupations or recreations. The compound—a tonic liquid—which forms the basis of the treatment is so agreeable that many persons take it with mineral waters as a refreshing and cooling beverage. It is perfectly innocuous, being made from herbs which, with one exception, may be gathered in the meadows and hedgerows of this country. As a proof of the complete harmlessness of the ingredients, Mr. Russell gives in his book the recipe of the compound, which he who runs may read.

We have said that this is a tonic. It is also an appetiser: it acts powerfully on the digestive apparatus, increasing the capabilities of assimilation and nutrition. The effects of this are twofold: whilst the superabundant adipose is being expelled from the system by the natural process, the body is receiving increased nourishment, the blood is being enriched, and the whole system vitalised and strengthened, so that with decrease of weight comes increase of strength.

As to the reduction of weight, Mr. Russell claims that within twenty-four hours of commencing the treatment a decrease of ½lb. to 2lb. is registered by the weighing machine, still more in extreme cases of obesity; and this reduction continues in the same ratio daily until normal proportions are reached. The treatment may then be discontinued.

Our advice is, GET the book! By sending three penny stamps (to defray private postage) to Mr. F. Cecil Russell, Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C., any reader of this publication will receive a copy of "Corpulency and the Cure" by return post; and let us assure him (or her) they will certainly not regret the trouble they have taken.

The Russell Treatment for the Cure of Corpulency

A

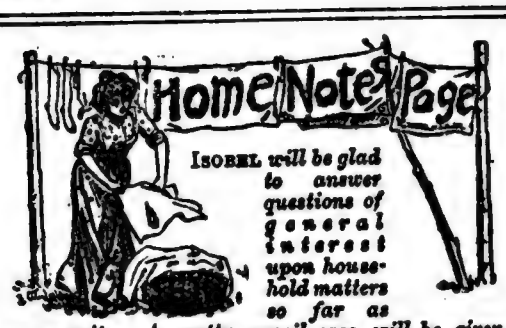
UNIQUE TREATMENT

The "Russell" treatment is a marvellously efficacious and radical cure, which is not only not harmful, but is extremely vitalising and strengthening, promoting appetite and aiding digestion, assimilation, and nutrition. Meanwhile, the reduction of adipose matter goes steadily on until normal weight is reached.

NO NOXIOUS DRUGS.
NO STRINGENT DIETARY.
NO DRASTIC RESTRICTIONS.

AN UNFAILING TEST.—The weighing machine will prove that the reduction of fat commences within twenty-four hours, the loss of weight varying from ½lb. to 2lb.; even more than this in severe cases of obesity.

On receipt of three penny stamps to defray postage under plain sealed envelope, etc., Mr. F. Cecil Russell, Woburn House, 27 Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C., will be pleased to forward to all readers of "Pearson's Weekly" a gratis copy of his authoritative work, "Corpulency and the Cure" (256 pages, 8vo). It contains the most exhaustive information on the causes and cure of obesity, besides a thousand testimonials from the author's patients, and as many extracts from the Press. All communications treated as strictly private.



ISOBEL *will be glad to answer questions of general interest upon household matters so far as space permits. A pretty pencil-case will be given to each reader whose inquiry is dealt with on this page. Envelopes should be marked* HOME NOTES PAGE.

Stains on Brown Boots will, as a rule, come off if rubbed with a flannel soaked in methylated spirit. (*Reply to* A. J. JUNE.).

Clean your Windows with Paraffin, using very clean cloths to polish them with thoroughly. Flies object to the smell of paraffin and will not approach it. (*Reply to* NELL.)

To Kill Moth. Take fur blankets, or pillows infested with moth, and put them into a baker's brick oven which has just been used for baking. Let these remain over-night, and the next day beat thoroughly in the open air.

Invisible Ink which is colourless, but turns yellow on being heated, is made as follows: Dissolve equal parts of sulphate of copper and sal-ammoniac in water. Cork tightly and use carefully. (*Reply to* DOVER CASTLE.)

Breadcrumbs for Frying. Let them always be baked in the oven, without being allowed to take colour. Then pound finely and pass through a sieve. By this method the fish or meat will be much crisper.

If your Children go in for drawing, painting, fancy work, or any other work, they should send specimens of what they can do best to the Editor of this paper, who has some nice prizes to give away. Send them along as soon as you like in envelopes marked "WORK."

Lemonade Powders, such as you wish to make, should be prepared as follows: Rub two drachms of tartaric acid, three ounces and a half of sugar, and five drops of oil of lemon thoroughly together in a china or stone mortar. When mixed, place in a tightly corked bottle for use. (*Reply to* D. F. H.)

This Lacquer Recipe will suit your purpose, I hope. Take two quarts of rectified spirits of wine and three pounds of seed lac, picked particularly clean and clear of all black specks and pieces. Upon the cleanness depends the brightness of the lacquer. Add the two together, place in a bottle, keep warm, and shake often till dissolved. (*Reply to* LOXSDALE.)

Veal Salad. Boil a knuckle of veal slowly in three quarts of water. When tender, remove the bones, chop the meat, and add the liquor (which should be greatly reduced), two teacupfuls of breadcrumbs, a little lemon juice, some chopped herbs, pepper and salt. Dash chopped parsley over all, and put into a mould decorated with slices of hard boiled eggs. Serve cold with lettuce and tomato.

Irish Hash is a good way of using up the remains of a leg of mutton. Take slices from the roast leg and sprinkle each with minced shallot and parsley. Place a piece of butter about the size of a large walnut in a clean, enamelled stew-pan. When the butter is dissolved add the slices of mutton and toss till they are lightly browned and hot. Have a border of mashed potato on a hot dish, brown it with a salamander, and place the slices of meat in the centre. Have ready some nice white sauce, add fried chopped mushrooms to it and colour to a pale green by means of some spinach juice. Pour this over the meat, garnish with rings of fried onion, and send to table at once.

Does Every Woman have a Chance to Marry? That is the kind of question which you will find discussed in HOME NOTES this week. It seems strange that so many women less fitted to make men happy find husbands, while others are left on the shelf. The Editress of HOME NOTES will be glad of your views upon the subject. But more solid information is by no means neglected. Some invaluable and useful hints on "Science and Health," dealing with the uses of phosphorous for the nervous system; Etiquette concerning Weddings; Advice to Mothers; Tourist Notes dealing with a Visit to Rome; Hints on Dressmaking, Cookery, Fancy Work, etc., etc., will be found in the afore-mentioned charming little paper for ladies.

For Shortbread always use icing sugar in preference to caster sugar.

When the Hair Splits as you describe it, it should be cut by a good hairdresser and singed. Have this treatment carried out at least once a month, and the condition of the hair will soon improve. (*Reply to* E. R.)

Dandelion Beer. Boil in five gallons of water two ounces of dandelion leaves, five ounces of ginger, and half an ounce of hops; strain off and boil again, adding three pounds of sugar and two ounces of Spanish juice. Allow this to ferment for twenty-four hours and then bottle for use. (*Reply to* DRIFFIELD.)

Old Potatoes should be either boiled or steamed in their skins, for the most nourishing part of the potato is next the skin and often wasted when peeled. Drain the potatoes and rub in a cloth to get off the skins. When peeled entirely, return to the sauce-pan to dry and they will be floury and white. (*Reply to* HANCOCKS.)

The Cracks in a Felt Hat may be taken out as follows: Place a damp cloth over it and then iron. There should be a wooden block or something hard that will fit the inside of the hat, so as to resist the pressure of the iron. If you have not got this block, you had better send your hat to a hatter. (*Reply to* ELLIOTT.)

To Remove Tar from Clothing. Apply to the stain with a piece of flannel successive applications of turpentine, coal tar, naphtha, and benzine. If the stains are very old they should be well rubbed with a flannel dipped into salad oil. This softens the tar, which afterwards yields to the other treatment. (*Reply to* WYNN.)

Caerphilly Cream Cakes. Take fine dry flour and pass it through a sieve, into it mix a teaspoonful of baking powder and a pinch of salt. Mix with sufficient sour cream to make into a dough. Roll out lightly into flat cakes a quarter of an inch thick and bake on a griddle on the top of the stove. Currants and sugar may be added with advantage.

In these Days of Competition it is always hard for a girl, who has to earn her living, to know what to do. If any of my girl—or men—readers are in doubt, I should advise them to send a specimen of their handwriting, together with six penny stamps and a stamped, addressed envelope to "Ranee," 32 Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., when they will receive some valuable advice.

An Inexpensive Ragout of Mutton. Cut two pounds of coarse lean mutton into small pieces and fry them in a pan with an onion chopped small. Pour sufficient water over to cover the meat, adding a few herbs and any scraps of vegetables which you have by you. Simmer gently for two hours, then season with pepper and salt, and thicken the gravy nicely with flour. Boil the gravy (after setting the meat on a hot dish) for three minutes, stirring well, and serve.

American Pie. Cut a pound and a half of lean beef steak into squares of convenient size, stew it till tender in water (not quite sufficient to cover the meat) with a tablespoonful of chopped parsley, a teaspoonful of chopped lemon thyme and marjoram, a teacupful of sliced onion, half a teaspoonful of pepper and salt to taste. When the meat is tender, thicken the gravy by stirring into it a tablespoonful of cornflour, mixed to a smooth paste, with a tablespoonful of Worcester sauce. Arrange the meat in a pie dish with alternate layers of thinly sliced boiled ham and sliced hard-boiled eggs, flavouring all with a very little allspice. Fill up the dish with gravy, cover with pastry, and bake till the crust is cooked.

Pot-Pourri. This is just the time of year to make pot pourri, and the present dry weather is favourable for it. Take a large quantity of fresh rose leaves, dry them in the sun, turn about constantly so that all get perfectly dry and crisp, and sweet-scented geranium, lemon verbena, honeysuckle, lavender, etc., all of which must be thoroughly dry. After about a fortnight's drying pepper the leaves with powdered orris root, cinnamon and bay salt—about a tablespoonful of each will be required. Then add twenty drops of oil of cloves, ditto lavender, half that quantity of oil of cinnamon, and as much oil of musk as you feel entitled to spend on your pot-pourri. This is the most expensive item in the preparation. Mix all well together, and place in a wide-mouthed jar. For the first year or two the leaves should be stirred often. Keep your jar in a dry place and each year you will be more delighted with its fragrant aroma. (*Reply to* EMMIE.)

Isobel

HOLIDAYS FOR 1902.		1902. JUNE.	JULY.	AUGUST.	SEPTEMBER.	OCTOBER.	NOVEMBER.
Good Friday	*March 28.*	S 1 8 15 22 29	S 6 13 20 27	S 3 10 17 24 31	M 1 8 15 22 29	W 1 8 15 22 29	S 1 8 15 22 29
Easter Monday	*March 31.*	M 2 9 16 23 30	M 7 14 21 28	M 4 11 18 25	T 2 9 16 23 30	T 2 9 16 23 30	S 2 9 16 23 30
Whitsun Monday	*May 19.*	T 3 10 17 24	T 1 8 15 22 29	T 5 12 19 26	W 3 10 17 24	T 3 10 17 24 31	M 3 10 17 24
Bank Holiday	*August 4.*	W 4 11 18 25	W 2 9 16 23 30	W 6 13 20 27	T 4 11 18 25	F 4 11 18 25	T 4 11 18 25
Coronation Day	*August 9.*	T 5 12 19 26	T 3 10 17 24 31	T 7 14 21 28	F 5 12 19 26	S 5 12 19 26	W 5 12 19 26
Christmas Day	*December 25.*	F 6 13 20 27	F 4 11 18 25	F 1 8 15 22 29	S 6 13 20 27	S 6 13 20 27	T 6 13 20 27
Boxing Day	*December 26.*	S 7 14 21 28	S 5 12 19 26	S 2 9 16 23 30			F 7 14 21 28
							S 1 8 15 22 29

WHY PRETTY DAUGHTERS ARE A NUISANCE.

BY A WORRIED FATHER.

I AM the father of a couple of girls whose physical attractions everybody agrees in praising. Their ages are eighteen and twenty respectively, and I do not deny that my wife and I are proud of them. At the same time, there are at least a hundred reasons why we sometimes regret that their prettiness is so noticeable as it appears to be. Had they been less attractive, there is no doubt that we should have had more of them to ourselves, and that we should have had more peace of mind generally.

Our home is in one of the London suburbs, and I go to and fro between my business place and home by train. It is now quite the thing for young fellows of twenty-five, or thereabouts, to thrust their society upon me when travelling to the City, in the hope that I shall make a friend of them; by this means they imagine that they will succeed in getting an invitation to my house, where, of course, they would meet Annie and Gertrude, whose fame as local beauties has reached the ears of the young men in question.

My wife is pestered in just the same way by curates and social workers, who realise that their circles of workers will be considerably enriched if they are able to secure the regular attendance of two girls whose smiles and graces compel the attention of all who come in contact with them. The curate says that he is quite sure our daughter Annie would make an excellent Sunday School teacher, and the gentleman who runs the Band of Hope Union says that he has no doubt whatever that Miss Gertrude would be extremely successful as a colleague on his staff.

At the different seasons of the year different excuses or subterfuges are advanced by those persons who seek to add to their own pleasure by securing the company of my girls. For instance, in the boating season, young Brown, the bank clerk, will get his own plain elder sister to come round to our house and beg that Annie and Gertie may accompany their party on a boating expedition up the river.

Of course, as a man of the world, I quite understand that young Brown is anxious to do all in his power to excite the admiration and envy of the other boating men; if he has on board his boat more pretty girls than have Robinson or Smith he not unnaturally feels that he is the man of the moment. When it is a tennis party that has been organised, my daughters are eagerly sought after, for the palpable reason that the young men of the day find it much more agreeable to play with a partner who will rivet the attention of onlookers than with one who will receive no more than a passing glance.

Many readers will say on reading my grumbles that my wife and I ought to consider ourselves very fortunate individuals, for it is not to everyone that pretty children are given. To this I would reply that much as we ourselves love the girls, and much as we appreciate their comeliness, we cannot but view with alarm the many incidental expenses and little ironies that their charms involve.

There is no doubt at all that if they had been plainer girls they would not have been so much sought after by their friends; they would not have been invited to so many parties, and they would not—mark this—have had to to be supplied with nearly so many new dresses and hats and pairs of gloves and boots. It is all very well to say that a pretty girl can afford to dress less expensively than a plain one, but any man who is the father of a pretty daughter will bear me out in affirming that she will require twice as big a wardrobe as the daughter who is homely of face and figure.

There is another reason for saying that pretty daughters are a nuisance, and it is one that applies to the father rather than to the mother. It is this; no matter how economical and careful a male parent may determine to be, he will find it remarkably difficult to resist the pleadings of a child when she is able to back up her intreaties with a sweet and winsome face. The father cannot put the fact of his girl's beauty away from him as the mother can, and he often enough says "yes" when he knows it would be more prudent to say "no."

Even the tradesmen of a locality are not so blind as not to see that the man who is the parent of pretty girls has a weak spot for many unnecessary little commodities that they would not dare to thrust upon the father of unattractive young ladies. The latest things in millinery, and many other branches of feminine utility and ornamentation, are sent up to the home on approval. Such a practice is deserving of the severest censure that can be given, but what does a whole volume of censure amount to when one or more of the pretty daughters of the house threaten to cry their eyes out unless a percentage of the things sent on approval be bought and paid for?

It will thus be seen by the discerning reader that the father of pretty daughters is the butt of pushful young suitors and enterprising tradesmen, while the mother of pretty daughters has her time encroached upon by social workers and others for whom she may personally care little. The recompense, of course, is that the girls one day will leave the parental roof for one where they will doubtless encounter worries of their own.

QUEER SPECULATIONS.

"It is astonishing how great an objection many people have to the truth," once remarked a well-known Old Bailey judge. "To each man offended by false statements concerning him, you may find ten others whose offended by having the truth said of them." Even so, wise judge. 'Twas ever thus; and so it will remain as long as idle men love the fruits of industry and abhor labour. And concurrent with this phenomenon is another equally strange—the widespread acceptance as truth of statements palpably absurd. Many years ago a fraudulent wag printed some tickets purporting to admit the bearer to the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, to witness a grand procession of all the animals. Any cheat with a sense of humour could do as much; but the marvellous thing was, that he succeeded in selling a good many of the tickets at half-a-crown each. Whether or not the purchasers expected to see the lion gallantly escorting the reindeer, the baboon coquetting with the cobra, and the polar bear offering the Bengal tiger the hospitality of his ice block, we shall never know. All we know is, that some people believed what the tickets stated, and bought them, and that the circumstance is a fine practical satire on human credulity. A man who had been confined in a lunatic asylum, but was discharged from it as cured, once wrote a pamphlet to prove that only those persons restrained as lunatics have their right senses, the larger part of mankind at liberty being mad. It is difficult to understand the position of those people at liberty who accepted this doctrine, which certainly found some adherents among them. The fact is, by some perversity of instinct, mankind is ever readier to accept the false than the true. Many a dyspeptic has contemptuously set aside a pamphlet describing the cures affected by Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, as a thing unworthy of examination, though containing statements of much interest and proved truth, which point the way to an infallible escape from his trouble. Not so Mr. Isaac Ruddick. Mr. Ruddick, who lives at Riggfoot, Tindell, near Carlisle, is a man widely known and respected, not merely in his business capacity at Tindell, but as superintendent of the local Sunday School, Bible Class teacher, and occasional preacher. Writing in May, 1901, Mr. Ruddick says: "Though from a boy I have been subject to periodical attacks of indigestion, never have I had another such cruel experience as that which befell me four years ago last February. No words can describe the pain I suffered in the chest and between the shoulders. It was one continuous ache, frequently accompanied by acute pain in the abdomen. In fact, as soon as I began to eat I used to be violently sick, the sickness often continuing, more or less, throughout the day. My face was thin and sallow, my tongue a dirty yellow, and my mouth dry and parched, with a most unpleasant taste always present. I was very constipated and much troubled with flatulence, wind in the region of the heart frequently causing me severe palpitation. My head ached, and stooping made me dizzy. My sleep was heavy, for I had a constant feeling of fatigue; but it did me no good. In the morning I was generally more despondent than ever, and wanted to shun everyone. In brief, I was utterly miserable. Of course, all this did not come on in a day. On the contrary, its approach was very gradual. I kept up as long as I was able—home a while, then back to work again—but in the end I had to give in, and for ten months was unable to do a stroke of work. I spent many pounds on medicines (said to be remedies!) before I went to a doctor, but continued to grow worse. I saw two doctors, one of whom thought I had an enlarged stomach, but the other attributed my trouble to a bad form of dyspepsia. They were both extremely good to me, but could not cure me. Finally, I was ordered to the seaside, but returned home worse than when I departed. I had lost quite 14lbs. in weight and looked a wreck. Yet I was not destined to die. Your pamphlets had been coming to our house for many years, and just then one of them fell into my hands." We interrupt Mr. Ruddick's narrative here to remark upon the fact that he *read* the pamphlet. It would not be sufficient merely to say that what he read was truth, for truth may be interesting or the reverse. The pamphlet referred to was interesting reading for anybody, but more particularly a sufferer such as Mr. Ruddick, who continues thus: "The perusal of the pamphlet decided me. I obtained a bottle of Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, and before I had finished taking it the sickness ceased. Thus encouraged, I persevered with it until I had taken twenty small bottles. What a change they wrought! Health gradually returned, until at length I was better and stronger than I had been for many a year, and so complete was my cure I have never needed any medicine since." No speculation here! Honest fact, plainly told and substantially vouched for.

INDIGESTION
POISONS THE BLOOD

as surely as a serpent's bite. It lessens brain power, lowers vitality, produces languor, sleeplessness nervous depression, and is the source of aching heads and weary limbs.

THE KEY TO HEALTH IS

good digestion and Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup gives that assuredly. "After suffering from acute indigestion and constipation for over two years," says Mr. BARBER, Woodrow Dairy, Stourton Caundle, Dorset, "Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup completely cured me, and this when everything else had failed."

MOTHER
SEIGEL'S
CURATIVE # SYRUP.

LET'S TALK OF GRAVES

The "Enterprise" Parcel 25/-

51 Articles for 25/-

Contents: 6 Table Knives, 6 Table Forks, 6 Dessert Knives, 6 Dessert Forks, 6 Dessert Spoons, 6 Tea Spoons, 1 Pair Sugar Tongs, 2 Table Spoons, 1 Mixed Sugar Spoon, 6 Egg Spoons, 2 Mustard Spoons, 3 Salt Spoons, 1 Silver Mounted Bread Knife.

J. G. Graves is the only manufacturer who supplies the public direct, and the whole of the Goods are manufactured in the Firm's own Factory in Sheffield.

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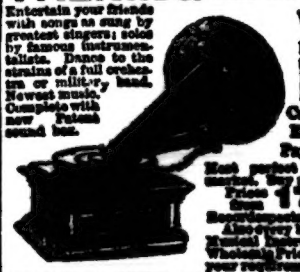

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Doubts Removed Gratis.

A pencil-case will be awarded to each person whose letter is dealt with on this page, or whose suggestion for a title is used.

B. J. S. W. is kind enough to say some nice things about *P. W.*, especially the "Home Notes" page. She knows Isobel must be a lady, in her own mind, for "no mere man could give such good hints on all-round household things. But she would like to be sure."——Yes, Isobel is a real live lady. Men have succeeded in doing many things, but, so far, I have never come across one who could tackle Isobel's work. The household hint department of a paper, to say nothing of its "love advice" branch, could only be undertaken by the fair sex, and if any man in this building is caught interfering by word or look in the mysteries of removing claret stains from linen or heart-burnings from the troubled lover, he has rather a poor time of it for a day or two from our brilliant feminine staff.

"WHAT is the correct expression for greeting a friend?" asks P. L. "Is it 'hallo,' 'hello,' or 'hulloa'? One sees the word printed in so many different ways that I am constrained to ask your authority on the point."——Did you ever meet an Englishman who greeted you with "hello," or "hallo"? I certainly never did. "Hullo" it is, in this country, and nothing but "hullo."

C. A. W. has just gone into town from country life, and thinks his shoes wear out quicker there than in the country, though he only walks about the same distance. "Do boots," he asks, "wear out sooner in town than in the country? And do they wear out sooner in wet or dry weather?"——Certainly the hard contact of the pavement must wear out boots sooner than the yielding surface of a country road. As to fine or wet weather, the soles of the boot probably suffer less in a day's walk through wet streets than under fine conditions. The layer of mud on the pavement must soften its contact with the sole, and the mud you collect on the boot itself acts as a sort of protection from wear.

POLYGLOT and a friend do not speak a word of English, and enter a railway carriage, where they meet a friend of POLYGLOT. How can he introduce the two? Would mentioning the names be sufficient, or should he interpret the usual greetings?——If POLYGLOT were in China or Peru, and wanted to introduce two people without knowing the language, he would probably make things understood by mentioning their names and leaving them to rub noses or pull pigtails as custom dictated. Any remarks might be carried on through the usual medium of hands or feet—umbrellas barred—and an interpreter should not be, in the first instance, necessary. In England, where handshaking obtains very largely, the process should be even simpler. If a man does not know how to say "how-d'you-do?" he can smile it quite intelligibly.

T. R. writes: "I have noticed a curious resemblance in the results of the recent war to what was forecasted in a *P. W.* story some years back, entitled 'An American Emperor.' In that story the value of the long-range rifle over the artillery with the men intrenched and widely scattered seems to me to have been an almost absolutely correct forecast of what has happened in Africa. As your paper has a world-wide circulation, do you not think it possible that the ideas put forth may have had some bearing on Boer tactics?"——I must confess it never occurred to me that *P. W.* was responsible for the British reverses at the opening of the war. But, now I come to think of it, I did notice a rather mysterious-looking dark person, with a rugged beard and bronzed appearance, furtively glancing at a copy of the paper at about that time. Who knows but that he was a Boer emissary? At the same time, let me at once dispel the suggestion that General De Wet is really a late sub-editor of *P. W.* In spite of his extraordinary ability, this is not the case.

AN Edinburgh correspondent writes to protest against my remarks that the British nation does not shine in the field of music. He maintains that we have done, and are doing quite as well as foreigners in this art.——With all due deference to my correspondent and to British musicians, I cannot agree. Britain has many distinguished names on the roll call of musicians, but it would be simply childish to place any of them on a level with Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner, and others of the German school. That is in composition. Our singers, it is true, in many respects compare well with those of foreign nationalities, but what British pianist can be compared with Liszt, Rubinstein, or Paderewski? What British violinist with Paganini, Sphor, or Joachim? In composition and instrumental performance, therefore, we stand far below our neighbours. Where we may claim some pre-eminence is in choral singing, for no other country can excel our Welsh choirs, and many of those of Yorkshire and the Midlands. British choristers are more manly and robust than Continentals, and often finer in intonation. But while making these reservations, I must adhere to the statement that it is in other fields than music that our nation has shown itself superior to its competitors.

E. F. W. and his friends have often discussed, but never settled the question: "What is beer?" Can I enlighten them?——Certainly. It is several things. "Beer" is defined in one instance as "one who is, or exists." So E. F. W. is presumably himself a "beer." It is also an obsolete form of "bier," a mole or pier, or the obsolete present and preterit of "bear." It has also another meaning, namely, "an alcoholic liquor made from any farinaceous grain first malted and ground, and its fermentable substance extracted by hot water." E. F. W. can, therefore, make a pretty wide choice as to what the meaning of the word is. But let me also hope that his present ignorance of its meaning constitutes bliss.

"WHO is Mrs. Harris?" This question from J. P. C., who gives me a quotation from the life of Goldsmith which refers to a "medical degree, mystic and shadowy as the immortal Mrs. Harris."——Of course, most readers know the origin of the lady. She comes from Dickens' "Martin Chuzzlewit," and owes her immortality to the fact that nobody save Mrs. Gamp had ever seen or heard of her. That good lady's constant references to her once goaded Mrs. Betsy Prig to the impassioned protest that "there wasn't no sich a person." Mrs. Harris, though she had no tangible existence, is, however, most useful to us nowadays when we want a simile for something, like the medical degree referred to, which is mystic and shadowy.

CONNIE is constantly meeting young men, sometimes many times a day. She, of course, cannot bow to them every time she meets them. Can I advise her as to a good serviceable permanent expression of countenance to wear which would be at the same time gracious and dignified?——CONNIE should choose the expression best representative of her own character. If she is a thoughtful girl, something far away with a little dreaminess in it would admirably suit the purpose. If she is light and gay, a smile accompanied by an upward heave of the head would give quite a nice impression to the probably jaded masculine passer-by. The heave should be sudden, but yet graceful, and requires a few days' practice before perfection can be attained. The downcast eye, too, has been known to work miracles with the opposite sex, but requires delicate technique. But how can I convey in cold print what I mean? If CONNIE will send her photograph, I shall be most happy to hand it over to our Beauty Editor, who will mark off by diagrams and dotted lines the necessary length of her smile, droop of her eyelid, and poise of her head, according to the artistic requirements of her face.

D. M. asks: "Which men would seem to live the longest, those of active life and habits like, say, Lipton, and Kitchener, or thinkers and poets like Ruskin, or Tennyson?"——I should imagine the life of a philosopher to be the best from a longevity point of view, judging from the examples we have. Nearly all the great philosophers of the century, to mention only Goethe, Carlyle, Emerson, Huxley, Darwin, Herbert Spencer and Ruskin, have lived to great ages. The reason presumably is that, if a man is a philosopher, he is able to include in his scope the philosophy of living a good and regular life. One cannot imagine any of the men mentioned changing his winter clothes in March, sitting in a draught, or getting his feet wet without removing his boots. Neither can one conceive of a delver into the "origin of species" taking irregular meals or eating bad food. A man of active life must be more or less compelled to suffer such inconveniences, and, unless he has a very strong constitution, must suffer for it by a shorter life. So, if D. M. is not sure whether to become a commander-in-chief, a tea merchant, or a moralist, yet wants to live to a ripe old age, he might find the Ruskin business more in his line than that of Kitchener or Lipton.

OWING to the kindness of some of our readers, the following FRESH AIR FUND Special Days have taken place during the past two weeks: New River Day, August 6th; Dawlish Day, August 7th; Griggs Cranbrook Park Estate, Ilford, August 11th; FEATHERED WORLD, August 12th and 13th; Anglia Day, August 13th; London Social Cyclists' Day, August 14th; Royal Army Medical Corps in Barbadoes, August 15th.

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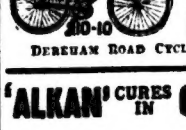

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